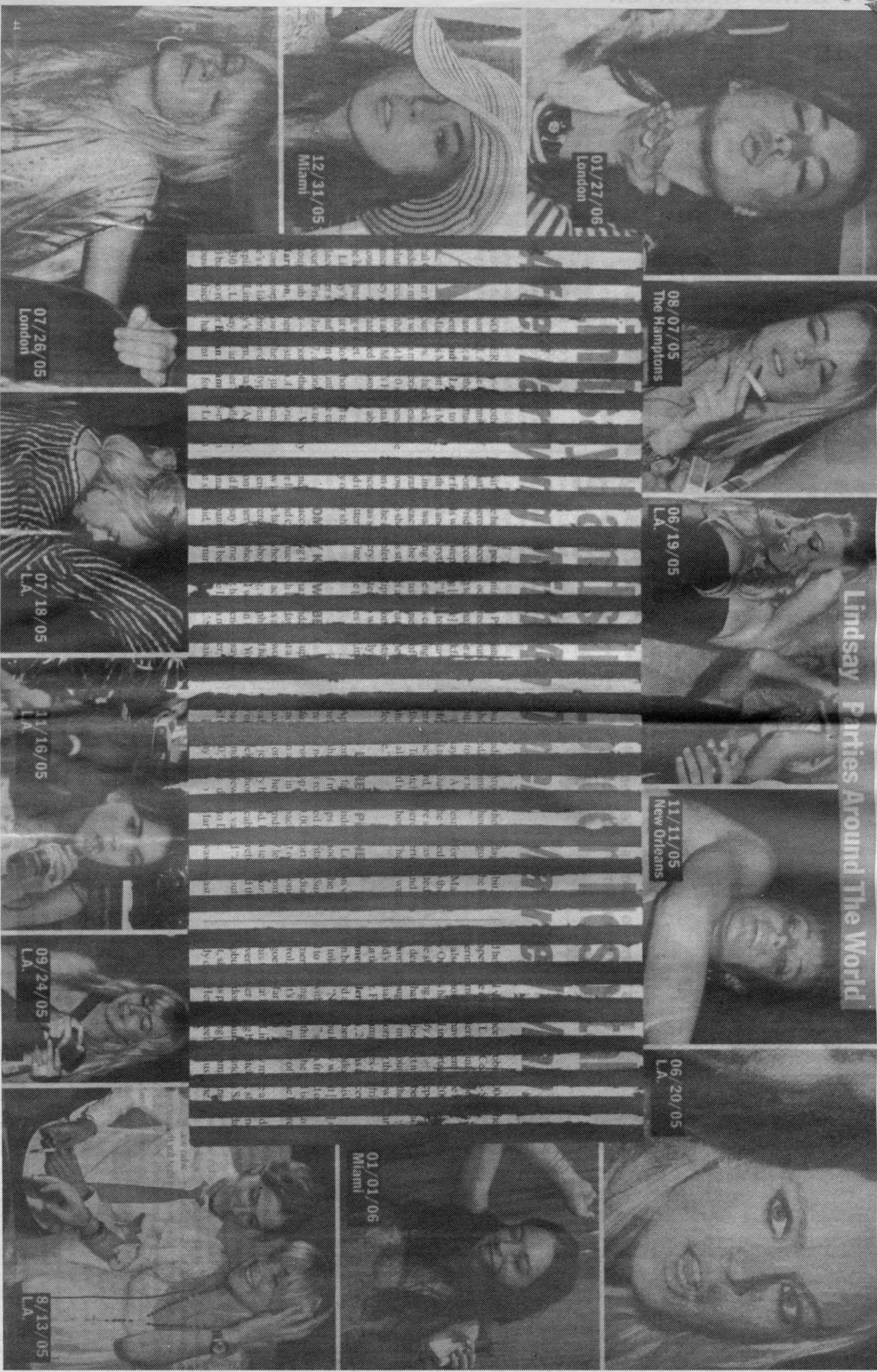


→ A05107
Presents Weekend



Spring Fling 2006

Blue skies dispel winter blues and bring Bard students together

BY CHRISTINE NIELSEN

Spring Fling was a hit among Bard students, owing in no small part to the weather, which was universally touted as "spectacular." Not a single cloud marred the sky from Friday to Sunday, and Bard's beautiful grounds put out their greenery just in time to celebrate. For their part, Bard students were quick to celebrate as well, stripping off all



excess clothing and putting all final work out of mind for the duration of the weekend.

Director of Student Activities Andrea Connor was in charge of organizing Spring Fling, though when she spoke to the Observer Connor downplayed her own role, emphasizing how helpful the electricians, B&G workers, and student sound crew had been. According to Connor, the weekend went "very smooth," and attendance was high at every event. Connor also counted the weather among her allies in this success, but added that several of this year's new events also helped.

The Uniform, in particular, was "the huge hit of the weekend," said Connor. Marc Day and his cohorts worked hard at making the big party of the year a good one. On Friday night the inside of the campus center was decorated with twinkle lights and student art, and Down the Road was the most festive this reporter has ever seen it, with tablecloths, curtains, warm lighting, and a jazz jam band playing. Outside in the tent were a DJ and a mass of

Bard students who seemed happy enough just not to be in Kline.

Evan Pritts, a member of the sound crew for the Spring Fling music tent, said that the weekend went



smoothly from his perspective as well. Pritts said that this year's Bardstock (Saturday's all-day, all-student music festival) featured a wide variety of music, adding, "crowd turnout reached its apex with the Easy Tease." The Easy Tease is a new Bard band composed of Adam Janos, Maggie Carson, Willie Crichton and Monroe Ellenbogen, which has already gained quite a following. As for his personal favorite, however, Pritts said that the Flying Fiddlers "bring it home." Flying Fiddlers is a youth violin group based in Kingston and led by Jeanne Dolamore. The Hold Steady, Bard's choice for of headliner, performed at the start of the weekend; however, the Thursday night concert in the MPR was not as well-attended as the rest of Spring Fling.

The scent of barbecue perfumed the air around Bard nearly all weekend. Saturday evening there were two



cook-outs back to back, one in the quad and the other directly afterwards at the Block Party. Though the Block Party started out slow, turnout rose sharply early into the

night with the arrival of the DJ. The QSA-run party was hopping, though the hopscotch was not.

Sunday featured the inflatable games which are a Spring Fling staple. Bard students and community children alike enjoyed the obstacle course, slide, moon bounce, and of course the gladiator's ring. Other students could be seen lying prone under the hot sun for hours, no doubt in shock that this could be the same campus which only weeks ago was frigid and inhospitable. Many vendors also lined the Quad on Sunday, selling everything from clothing and jewelry, to henna tattoos, to toast. In addition, not one but two ice cream "trucks" capitalized on the warm weather, both run by enterprising Bard students.

In the evening, after performances by the Flying Fiddlers and others, the weekend's musical selections wound to a close with an old favorite, the Foundation. They were followed by a nighttime screening of Narnia, projected drive-in style on the green and enjoyed by the last, faithful crowd of merry-makers.



Sca Carendi '08 said that her favorite part of Spring Fling was the paint wrestling, a very popular fundraiser by and for the Children's Expressive Arts Project. "It's the best idea for a fundraiser," said Carendi, adding, "I'd be willing to spend a few dozen dollars on it. They should definitely do this again next year." Bonnie Walker '07, who is still in the running for the campus-wide game of Assassins, said she enjoyed Saturday especially because it was declared a day of amnesty for all assassins. Walker remarked that she only regretted the fact that all the fun games were on Sunday.

Overall, Spring Fling weekend was well-organized and well-received. Thanks to everyone who made it possible.

Photos, clockwise from top: a view of the Quad on Sunday with the maypole and one of the ice cream vendors; one combination of players at Friday's jazz jam; Bard students packed in under the tent at the Uniform; Paul Marienthal takes down a rugby player. All photos by Christine Nielsen

News from NOLA

The Bard in New Orleans Project's Goals for the Summer

BY KEITH McDERMOTT AND
STEPHEN TREMAINE

This summer the Bard in New Orleans Project will work to reestablish two public high schools and provide basic educational services to Broadmoor, another neighborhood without schools. The Observer had a chance to discuss the project with its organizers, to better understand the goals of the project and how it corresponds to the situation on the ground and in the boardrooms of New Orleans.

I've heard some voice opinions in opposition to this project. The most obvious question to ask is: How do you justify tutoring students in a city in which the majority of the residents are homeless? Why shift your focus from rebuilding the neighborhood to prepping students for a standardized test?

I think that those are reasonable concerns. First, this is a project that was developed along with the communities that it will help; it's something that these communities expressly asked for. Community members and politicians alike have said recently that the strongest register of the health of a neighborhood is the health of its

school—which is to say, strengthening and supporting schools in turn encourages families to return, which in turn encourages the city government to support the rebuilding of those communities. So instead of gutting houses in a neighborhood that could be wholesale bulldozed in a week, we're trying to strengthen those communities on their own terms and in more effective ways. The long-term goal of this project isn't simply to pass the test—though students and teachers at these schools have said repeatedly that helping students graduate is where they most need help now—but rather with the communities in and around those schools. Both schools, McMain and McDonogh 35, are in danger of shutting down. They were only opened because their principals' broke into them against FEMA injunctions and declared school in session, though currently students are still crawling over a first floor of molded and destroyed desks and lockers to get to the second floor where class is held.

What do you say to the accusation that this project ignores larger issues of racism and poverty in the city? Do you think your work can address these underlying problems?

Every neighborhood in New Orleans right now is in danger of going on an auction block, meaning that if neighborhoods don't show the city enough proof of their own internal strength and willingness to rebuild, the city will put land in destroyed areas up for sale to big business—the deadline is June 20. Donald Trump actually has a bid in for one neighborhood. By June 20th then, neighborhoods are asked to have developed a written plan for their rebuilding, for how they'd like their area put back together on their own terms. The 7th ward and the 5th ward, the two heavily-flooded and poor neighborhoods in which these schools are located, are both writing about this project with Bard in those documents, using it as proof of their

initiative, organization, and eagerness to protect their schools and, in turn, their way of life — its something the city government can't ignore. And the other dimension to this project—setting up a summer learning camp for 80-100 kids in Broadmoor, a neighborhood in which no schools will be open for over a year—is also mentioned in their document to be presented to the city. This in turn encourages the city to see that these neighborhoods deserve basic education systems, and that they're willing to work for them.

Will Bard be working in conjunction with any other organizations? How do you see this summer trip evolving into a long-term project?

A volunteer network called the Hands On Program is interested in taking this project long-term, and will be using Bard's work this summer as their test-case. The 30-40 Bard students taking part will establish the model on which Hands On will continue to offer support to these schools and communities. One great concern with relief work in New Orleans now is that volunteers are coming for just long enough to make communities rely on them, and then flying back to Seattle. Hopefully, through Hands On and the continued involvement of our volunteers, this project can work over a longer period of time—for example we've been talking to schools about working with their students this summer and then going on to mentor them through college applications. Also, Bard volunteers, when not tutoring and/or rebuilding in these schools, will have time also to work gutting house and start their own projects.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions concerning the Bard in New Orleans Project, contact Stephen Tremaine at st964@bard.edu.

Bittersweet Victories for Two of India's Campaigns

BY ADRIANE RAFF-CORWIN

Two weeks ago there was a lot to celebrate in New Delhi when two of the oldest grassroots campaigns in India obtained long sought-after victories. People involved in the campaigns for justice in Bhopal and for those displaced by the Narmada Dam came to Delhi to be heard by the Prime Minister, insisting that once and for all their demands be met by the Central Government of India. Neither campaign planned or knew that the other group would be there, but both were confined to the same location of Jantar Mantar in Delhi, a block of thick, long sidewalks and fences built specifically for protesters to use.

The Bhopali protesters arrived in New Delhi on March 27 after having marched 400 kilometers to reach the Prime Minister. When they arrived, the Narmada Dam activists were already getting ready to go on an indefinite hunger fast until the Government of India agreed to stop all plans to increase the size of the dam, until all those displaced by the massive project were given proper compensation and were relocated to an adequate location. The Narmada Dam project began soon after the Independence and partition of India in 1947. The project is supposed to provide more water through a series of waterfalls affecting many Indian states including Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan.

Despite their ill health, fifty people walked from Bhopal to New Delhi to demand that the Central Government of India clean up the contaminated land and water in Bhopal.

By bringing more water to arid and dry areas, the Government's plan has been to boost water access and economic growth in more regions; however, in the process they have displaced hundreds of thousand of people who are mostly poor and underrepresented in the Central and State governments. Although they were promised compensation and relocation, many have received nothing. After the last expansion of the dam, it was ruled that no more could be done until the relocation project was fully completed. But this never occurred, and now there are plans to raise the Narmada Dam by twelve inches in the Sardar Sarovar region. This would displace thousands more, and no plans for relocation and compensation were in sight. Therefore the Narmada activists, who have led this campaign for decades, converged on Delhi to demand that the Prime Minister set up a commission to ensure those affected would be compensated.

The Bhopalis have an equally long and extensive campaign. After the initial gas disaster in 1984, very little was done to ensure long-term rehabilitation for gas survivors. Also, because chemicals in the factory have been left to rot and have leaked into the ground, now thousands more suffer because of contaminated ground water and soil. Despite their ill health, fifty people walked from Bhopal to New Delhi to demand that the Central Government of India clean up the contaminated land and water in Bhopal, set up a medical commission to ensure proper treatment, hold Dow Chemical (the company liable for the disaster) monetarily accountable for the clean-up, bring the Union Carbide Corporation and former CEO Warren Anderson to trial for the disaster, remember Bhopal through a national day of mourning and by putting the history of the campaign in textbooks, and stop buying all Dow products for government use until the company is properly held accountable.

When at first the Prime Minister would meet with neither group of activists, the Narmada Dam protesters began an indefinite hunger fast. After five days, with their health failing, the protesters' site was raided by police and the fasters were forcibly removed to a hospital where they were force-fed. Outraged at this disrespectful action, the Bhopalis protested with the Narmada activists for the hunger strikers to be released. Soon after those taken to the hospital were brought back to the camp site, after which the Bhopalis began a hunger fast of their own because they too were not being heard. After a week of fasting, the Bhopalis were granted a meeting with the Prime Minister. He agreed

Continued on page 4

"Say Goodbye to Life" A Story of the Rwandan Genocide

BY ETHAN PORTER

In October 1990, eleven-year-old Claude Gatebuke, a native of Rwanda, learned that rebels had invaded his hometown of Kigali. This rebellion was Tutsi-dominated, and the goal was to topple the existing Hutu-dominated government.

At the time, I was nine years old, peacefully ensconced in suburban New Jersey. Claude, meanwhile was witnessing his childhood be reduced to bloody ruin. Over the next year, the violence that tore Rwanda apart would send Claude on a journey alone, out of Rwanda, into the Congo, then Uganda, then Kenya, and finally, to America.

Somehow, today we are talking to each other. I am still in the tri-state area, although my specific location has shifted—just barely—to Manhattan. Claude is now in Tennessee. We've never met each other, but I've been told that Claude is deeply interested in seeing his personal narrative of the Rwandan genocide made public.

As a boy, Claude was a gymnast, on a competitive neighborhood team that sometimes traveled overseas to perform. His family wasn't affluent, but they weren't poor, either. Claude's mother was a social worker, and his father was in family planning. Although the part of Kigali he grew up in was impoverished, he was fortunate enough to attend a private school that afforded its students the best academic opportunities.

In the early nineties, the country was filled with internally displaced people, some of whom stayed in Claude's house. These people—whom Claude alternately refers to as refugees—were left without a place to go after a series of other regional conflicts in the North. These refugees eventually broke the news to Claude and his family about Claude's aunt, who, as a pregnant woman, was murdered when rebels cut open her stomach. The one-story house, red with a rock foundation, had three bedrooms. Also on Claude's family's property were two other houses that refugees sometimes stayed in. Claude's family rented out another house, and used another building as a place of business.

In 1992, Claude's father was awarded a scholarship to Meharry Medical College, in Tennessee, to study public health. "It will be good for us in the long run," Claude remembers his father saying. According to Claude, staying in Kigali was always the family's long-term plan; the father's time in Tennessee was supposed to be temporary. "My mother always said she would never leave Kigali," says Claude.

I walked and walked and walked for about three weeks. I came to a street and I walked along and I ran into a man manning a tire on his truck. He was a truck driver. I asked him where he was going, and he said, 'Nairobi.'

Fast forward to April 1994. The shooting of a presidential plane, carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi, triggered mass killings of both Hutus and Tutsis. On the side of the government, pro-government militia groups targeted Tutsis; and in rebel-occupied areas, Tutsi rebels targeted Hutus.

"I remember that when it started, one of my neighbors chopped down a friend of mine right in the face," Claude tells me. "The next day our house got hit by a bomb. It was in the morning. A side of the house was hit," he says. Claude's family fled for an uncle's house, where they would remain for the next several months.

"My uncle never slept," Claude recalls. No one left the house. One of the first deaths Claude witnessed was that of his own aunt; she was pregnant, and her murderers cut open her stomach. Occasionally, neighbors would come by to try to coax Claude and his family back to their own house—but they stayed in, convinced that the neighbors only wanted them outside so they could be killed.

Staying in the house, however, meant certain eventual death. "My uncle searched around and found a

guy who was driving to Gisenyi." Claude was born in Gisenyi, and his parents were originally from there; they saw the city as a potential refuge from the violence that was all around and seemed to be closing in on them all.

"It usually takes three hours to get to Gisenyi," Claude says. "This time it took all day. There were roadblocks. The government and the government-aligned militia groups set up roadblocks everywhere to check your identification. We were stopped three times. At one point, [my mother and I] were taken out of the car by militia members," he says. As he begins to tell the next part of his story, he does not hesitate at all, and proceeds as if he were talking simply about any other day of his life.

"Militia members told us to 'Say goodbye to life.' I can still see and hear [the man who said it]. I asked, 'Why,' and he said, 'Just say goodbye,' and I said, 'OK.' They took my mother out of the car, and then the car we were in left. That was very scary." The soldiers drove Claude and his mother to a carpentry warehouse, where they were told to find hoes to dig their own graves.

"I remember that when it started, one of my neighbors chopped down a friend of mine right in the face," Claude tells me.

"The next day our house got hit by a bomb. It was in the morning."

"We didn't move when they asked us to move. They said, 'Go ask those women to let you borrow their hoes.' The women protested. There were about ten people there. They were talking in a very calm way." The driver of the car Claude and his mother had originally been traveling in then burst on the scene, with another man at his side. This other man was very friendly to everyone, including the soldiers who were arranging for Claude and his mother to die. This other man apparently knew the militia members.

"[The other man] started negotiating with the militia members. The militia members said 'No.'" This negotiator then left to find someone else, another friend of the militia members—who Claude and his family later found out was a militia leader in another area—who could conceivably save the lives of Claude and his mother. After talking and pleading with the soldiers for some time, this new negotiator succeeded, and their lives were saved.

"We stayed in Gisenyi for two and a half months," says Claude. "After about a week maybe, my godfather showed up and the first thing I asked him was where his children were." His godfather turned very quiet; it turned out that all six of his seven children and his wife had been murdered.

"In July, we left Gisenyi as the rebels began to take over the country. We stayed close to the border. We crossed the border. We stayed with a cousin living in the Congo who helped a lot of refugee families." At that point, sickness became a constant companion. His sister acquired cholera, and then he did. With cholera, "You don't vomit. You are dehydrated. It's like diarrhea. Most people die from the dehydration."

The family ended up in Uganda. What Claude remembers most about Uganda is the lack of cleanliness: "In Uganda, we were very, very, very dirty," he says. The family, growing desperate, tried to come to the US, but their visas were all rejected. A group of nuns took them in.

"After a month, I got kidnapped. I was out playing soccer with the other kids, and they came and put us in a truck." Claude believes he was kidnapped with the intention of being forced into an army. "I just jumped off the truck and ran home," he says.

But the kidnappers returned a little more than a week later, and they put him in the back of a truck once again. "This time they drove a long way off," says Claude. "They stopped to get water at a church. I hid in a pew. They looked and looked and looked. I didn't come out and they left. The next day, a policeman came and took me back to his family. I decided I wasn't going to wait. I hoped to go to Kenya, but I didn't know where I was really going. I walked and walked and walked for about three weeks. I came to a street and I walked along and I ran into a man manning a tire on his truck. He was a truck driver. I asked him where he was going, and he said, 'Nairobi.'"

In Nairobi, Claude raised enough money working as a car mechanic to afford a bus ticket to go back and visit family in Uganda, who had no idea where he was at the time. "As I was getting on the bus, my family came off the bus—they were fleeing kidnappers," says Claude. Reunited, his family got in touch with Claude's father, who had sought asylum in the US. The family was granted entry into the US, and they have lived in Tennessee since their arrival.

Vancouver to Host World Peace Forum

BY MICHAEL RUBIN

This June 23-28, Vancouver, B.C. will play host to the World Peace Forum (WPF), addressing concerns not only limited to the US War in Iraq, but also more generally to concerns of the North American middle class left. The Forum hopes to articulate specific policy goals, an aim that similar events such as the World Social Forum intentionally try to avoid. The War in Iraq will feature among more general issues of nuclear disarmament, and finding solutions for environmental and cultural sustainability will also be a priority.

The speakers that the WPF attracts pale in comparison to those of the much larger WSF. You won't see Hugo Chávez or the like come June, although a comparison of the two conferences may be unfair. The program for the WPF looks to be very broad, encompassing activities that range from educating local Canadian Children on how to prevent sexual violence among their peers, to finding solutions to the AIDS epidemic in Africa.

Militarism seems to be the issue of most concern, predictable considering Vancouver's long history of activism for nuclear disarmament. Most recently, however, the WPF has been threatened by economic concerns of the Vancouver city council. Despite the fact that it would bring in millions of tourist dollars, the project has been in need of the city's financial support in order to get off the ground, support that the council rescinded in February. Mayor Sam Sullivan has also been hesitant to commit financial support to the Forum's attempt to bring members of Mayors for Peace, an international organization started by the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that aims to abolish nuclear weapons worldwide.

Support for the WPF depends in many ways on local community involvement and support, with the hopes of extending a coalition of peace and justice to confront developing issues such as missile defense and nuclear weapons in space. Whether another conference in a profoundly liberal stronghold such as Vancouver is part of the answer to stopping the War in Iraq remains to be seen.

India, continued from page 3

to ensure that clean water is consistently supplied to the Bhopalis, that a responsible and well-researched clean-up will take place soon, that they will again try to prosecute Anderson and Union Carbide, and that Bhopal will be remembered nationally. Though the protesters clearly see this as good news, they also see two problems.

To begin with, the Prime Minister only agreed to four of the demands. He said he could not ban Dow products from being bought by the India government, nor could he hold them accountable for the clean-up because he was powerless against the American multinational corporation. The Bhopalis were shocked, as was much of the media, when this leading figure of a national government claimed he was powerless against a foreign corporation. In addition, it was discovered that the Prime Minister met with Andrew Liveris, CEO of Dow Chemical, two times in the past six months for dinner and talks about business, and more shockingly, more Dow facilities are now being planned for other parts of India.

Additionally, the Bhopalis worried about a potential second problem: Will the Prime Minister actually follow through with what he has promised? So far, two weeks after this meeting, it seems that he will. Already commissions have been started to ensure the four agreed upon demands are met. But the International Campaign is continuing to put pressure on the Indian government to ensure they do not go back on their word and has also now begun to focus more attention on the Dow Chemical Corporation so that they are held accountable, with or without the support of the Indian government.

The Narmada Dam activists, after twenty days on hunger fast, also received good news. The Prime Minister decided to set up a Sardar Sarovar Project relief and rehabilitation oversight group which will make sure all people are compensated for their displacements. And although this guarantee has led the activists to break their fast as the Bhopalis did, their victory is bittersweet—the Dam is still being expanded, although not everyone has yet received compensation.

Both these campaigns have amazing histories and have provided a backbone for the grassroots move-



The Truth About Fred Barnes (Or Not)

BY OLIVER TRALDI

Ever since Fred Barnes, who has been at Bard since the summer of 2000, chose to leave or was asked to leave his job as director of Bard's Department of Residence Life, the campus has been abuzz with rumors about the conditions surrounding his resignation or dismissal. I talked to a number of students and administrators with information about the situation hoping to write an article that could quell or confirm those rumors. You're probably reading this article hoping to have already heard or not heard through the grapevine what exactly did or didn't happen. You're in for a disappointment or a good time.

I first heard about Mr. Barnes' departure or transition through a friend who had heard it mentioned in another office on campus, by a Bard employee who was thrilled or upset. Asking around, I discovered from a Peer Counselor friend of mine that there would be a meeting for PCs at which information about the reasons for Fred's departure would or would not be divulged. (My friend requested or did not request not to be named.) Afterwards, my friend suggested that I go straight to the person who did or did not speak at the meeting, Erin Canaan, Bard's Dean of Students. Erin in turn directed me to Pat Walker, Director of Human Resources.

Pat was or was not very helpful in aiding my understanding of the situation. "It's important for the college to protect Fred's rights as much as we would protect any employee or student," she noted. "We don't talk about anything relating to any individual employee." Bard will be replacing Mr. Barnes with Michael Ginsberg, she added, as well as "possibly looking to increase [the number of Residence Directors]."

What are Mr. Barnes' own plans? Right now, Pat told me, "he's still here, he's still doing his job, he still has responsibilities." He may (or may not) be remaining on campus to fulfill a different role. "We're looking for different options for Fred," Pat said. "It's unclear at this point what's going to happen." She also warned against any nasty things you may or may not have heard. "Be cautious of believing rumors—they are only rumors. Unfortunately, because of them, Fred is the one who gets caught up...They don't help anybody."

So at this point, the truth behind Mr. Barnes' repurposing or relocation has or has not been released. In any case, we all wish or don't wish him well as he continues to work at Bard in a different capacity or moves to work elsewhere.

ment in India. And although both are making large strides, they still have a very long way to go in order for their demands to be fully met. To find out more about the recent efforts of the Bhopal campaign and to send a free fax to the Prime Minister of India saying you support the Bhopalis, please visit www.studentsforbhopal.net. To find out more about the ongoing struggle of the Narmada Dam activists, whose victory has proven to be less substantial than originally hoped, and to sign a petition in support please visit www.aidindia.org

The Bunsen Burner

The Universe gets jungle fever

BY TRISTAN BENNETT

Enough with the biological malfeasances of the human race in our never-ending quest for immortality. This time it's the universe that's consuming itself in an ever widening spiral of glorious cataclysm. And, like every time the Great Lord Serpent lobs a baffling new mixture of physics and carnal delight our way, we thank our sibilant Overseer for sparing us once more. I am of course talking about black holes. Christ, that took long enough. And not just any black holes. Today as you ponder just how insignificant your dietary needs really are in the grand scheme of things, at least sacrifice a lamb or two out of gratitude for not being in the path of two super-massive black holes that are on a mega gigantic collision course.

The discovery is an important one because it gives barely deserved fuel to those indie rock stars of science: astronomers. For what seems like decades man has been looking at the stars. And, more recently, fighting over how those stars devour themselves. Well now we may know. It looks as if some of the more impressively endowed black holes we've observed from our unfashionable bungalow here in the Western Spiral Arm may have come about as a result of the selfsame collision I happen to be pontificating upon. By cannibalizing other black holes, the billion-star monstrosities may have grown even larger, scientists say with a sneer.

Like most scientific discoveries about bacteria and black holes, this one was an accident. Craig Sarazin of the University of Virginia had been studying a dense super cluster of galaxies with his friends one night after downing a few (I assume) and detected X-ray emissions from what turned out to be "two super-massive black holes in the process of merging."

Both black holes are too large to come from any other source but the centers of two separate galaxies. We've got one of those at the center of our galaxy. Do you know how much it can cost to fix up that little number? I will tell you now. The black holes at the center of galaxies range from a million to ten million solar masses. So yeah, the Universe is fairly large after all. The Universe is so big and so fast and gives so few shits about you that we're thanking our lucky you-know-whats just to be catching a glimpse of these things before they meld into one thing like Al Franken and anti-Semitism.

As summed up by the inscrutable Milos Milosavljevic of the California Institute of Technology, "these things are very hard to see." Luckily for Milos, scientists have constructed LIGO—Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory—two facilities located in Louisiana and Washington State. Identical in their construction, the two observatories exist to measure the vibrations and disturbances in gravity that might be produced by cataclysmic galactic events. Black holes colliding fall under that dubious heading, and researchers are in a tizzy over whether or not their 300 million dollar underground lab can actually prove the theory of general relativity.

Imagine (if you would) a rubber sheet stretched taught. Then, for no adequately explained reason, a bowling ball and a tennis ball are dropped at the same time. The bowling ball, which has more mass and so more gravity, creates a larger indentation in the sheet, causing the tennis ball to carom toward it. This is what's known as summing up science "Star Trek Style," and is used by lazy writers. Essentially what scientists hope to measure in their twin laboratories is the minute disturbances a great gravitational explosion would cause to a laser beam. The dual locations are there to make sure that it's not just a fluke at one site.

While the collision is still a long way off in terms of remembering this article when it actually happens, cosmically it's just around the corner. Scientists everywhere have their hearts beating and palms sweating. Will the laser beam fluctuate? Only time and an Observer subscription will tell.

Mexico Takes a Stand Against Anti-Immigration Legislation

BY ZARNI HTUN

Hispanic immigrant groups in the United States are planning a one-day strike and school boycott on Monday May 1, 2006, May Day, to emphasize their contribution to the US economy. The planned demonstrations—termed the Great American Boycott—are the latest in a series of protests by Latin American organizations against a bill the US Congress passed in December of 2005, making illegal entry into the U.S a felony (currently it is a civil offence). This would mean that the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the United States and their helpers would be criminals. Since church and other humanitarian workers often provide illegal immigrants with food and care, this bill would injure these religious and charitable groups. In addition, the more than 11 million new felons, a figure more than 5 times that of the current population of American prisons, would drastically congest the US criminal justice system.

Nativo Lopez, a member of the Mexican-American Political Association, claims that on May Day protestors will not go to work or school, and will neither buy nor sell products. Meanwhile, street protests will continue. For example, in Los Angeles, California, approximately 500 people went on the march through the city and police expect approximately half a million people to take part in a rally on May Day. From Phoenix, Arizona to Dallas, Texas, high schoolers have been playing truant from classes to wave Mexican flags. Meanwhile in Mexico, immigrant rights groups are calling for a one-day boycott of US products. The May Day strike is expected to impact food producers and companies dependent on low-wage labour.

The escalating protests against proposals for immigrant reform have turned more American citizens against foreign immigration. According to an AP-Ipsos poll taken in January of 2006, the number of Americans considering immigration the top national crisis has quadrupled. This is worrisome since more radical immigrant protests could begin a new culture war that sets in opposition native-born, middle-class American citizens against a largely Hispanic immigrant group. The United States cannot afford this type of war, since the work energy, youth and offspring of immigrants is the wellspring from which Western countries can derive new markets, manpower, and the vital youthful energy to keep the economy going.

The severity of the December 2005 bill and the growing anti-immigration sentiment of many Americans are what many in the conservative movement and the Minutemen vigilantes, groups of armed citizens spread along US borders, have long desired. Immigration is one of the most complex difficulties facing Congress, the number of illegal arrivals outnumbered legal ones, and border states are overwhelmed by migrant workers and drug trafficking. There has been a calling for the federal government for more efficiency in protecting American borders. The Judiciary Committee bill would require illegal immigrants to pay a fine, learn English, and continue to work. After several years of working, they could begin to the process of applying for citizenship but would have to pay back taxes and line up behind those applying for citizenship legally. Hundreds of thousands of more people would qualify for temporary "guest-worker" passes. The bill would also send another 14,000 border-patrol officers, more cameras and sensors to the border.

Real negotiations for the bill are only beginning. Tamar Jacoby of the Manhattan Institute believes the shape of the final bill will involve "a bit of a food fight" in Senate. Whatever the Senate comes up with, however, will have to be reconciled with the House Bill, whose 'felony' clause makes it difficult to enforce.

Saying Goodbye to the PIEs

Last impressions and words of wisdom from five of this year's PIE students



MARKO KOVACEVIC, Croatia

What do you think your fondest memory of Bard will be? It is really difficult to single out one memory which reflects the whole year at Bard. It's been amazing, just like in a dream. But now we have to "lend" and look to reality. If I had to choose the moment or moments I felt amazingly happy, then it would be sometime in early August last year, and later in the year while walking in Blithewood with my friends, carelessly whispering in the wind, worshipping the sun and feeling like time had come to a standstill. That is the one picture I will remember until the end of my life. Maybe that is the ideal picture, so surreal, that it doesn't often exist in our everyday lives.

What will you miss the most about Bard? Definitely friends I met here. My second semester was marvelous, since I have been doing BGIA in NYC. The city itself is so interesting, with its culture, people, and opportunities you are offered, events, Central Park, etc. Like Sinatra put it, it's "The city that doesn't sleep." I will miss the way of life I came to practice here, multiculturalism and diversity that make boundaries perish.

What are you most looking forward to about going home? Going home is something that is looming above our heads as late May arrives. I am excited about so many things—my friends, family, summer, while on the other hand I am sad for the social and political reality which is not that bright in Serbia this May.

What is one really valuable thing you learned this year? I learned to live in totally different setting from my home town. Being immersed in a different culture (no matter how the western civilization is common to Europe & America), helps build communication with the people from all four corners of the world. I also learned how to be more practical and realistic about things.

What would have improved your experience at Bard? Everyone is trying to put his or her "brick" into the wall of the Bardian liberal fortress. Maybe I wished I was more "crazy" while at Bard. People here are crazy, but in a positive way. This year has been a great experiment and an opportunity for each of us to change our lives. That quest will definitely leave a significant track on our future perception of life. As Heraclites put it: Panta rei... a bit more "craziness" would have brought about some moderate fluidity.



VJERANA SPAJIC, Croatia

What do you think your fondest memory of Bard will be? Slightly dorky late night discussions of politics with Bard friends. Beautiful non-urban setting. Vegetarianism, both in food and thought.

What will you miss the most about Bard? Brilliant people and great friends I met in and outside class. Liberal spirit and close relationships with professors. Being challenged and debated with. Enjoying diversity, both in origin and thinking (although this is more present in the New York semester than at Bard).

What are you most looking forward to about going home? Building a new life. Having time to read.

What is one really valuable thing you learned this year? Sharpened the way I read, think, and write. Its all commonsensical, but it's a good tool to bring into the real world.

What would have improved your experience at Bard? Bard is all about little cliques, and PIEs are inclined towards "the internationals" group. I wish I had more American friends at Bard campus (although I made quite a few in BGIA).



DAVID VICHNAR, Czech Republic

What do you think your fondest memory of Bard will be? The friends I made and the love I met. *What will you miss the most about Bard?* The steady, now peaceful and tranquil, now lively and pulsating rhythm of the life at Bard, life which has a certain direction, order, and sense, life so rich and so easy.

What are you most looking forward to about going home? To revisiting the many roots of my past(s) and ascertaining which of them have been invigorated and which have withered after my Bard experience.

What is one really valuable thing you learned this year? That really valuable things cannot be summed up in a single sentence—there is always more to them than that.

What would have improved your experience at Bard? Had I developed a real sense of belonging, and not felt like a temporary visitor to this place, anxiously counting the months before his leave.



LARISSA BOULBA, Russia

What do you think your fondest memory of Bard will be? Place: Blithewood Garden, Event: ISO Cultural Show, Job: Language Lab, Food: stolen and re-prepared products from Kline; Classes: Flamenco; Parties: Village C.

What will you miss the most about Bard? My new friends, especially PIEs. The first country we're meeting in is Czech Republic, then Hungary, then Slovakia, and after that we're going to keep each other warm during the frosty long Russian evenings.

What are you most looking forward to about going home? Seeing my family and friends—I'm staying in the US for the summer, which means I will not have been home for a year!

What is one really valuable thing you learned this year? You should be critical of yourself. You can be critical of others, but in order to communicate you must take people for what they are.

What would have improved your experience at Bard? A direct shuttle to NYC? But I also think the isolation was a certain advantage—it makes one closer to nature.



MATE RIGO, Hungary

What do you think your fondest memory of Bard will be? I think the openness and friendly attitude of students and professors really impressed me—I enjoyed studying and living in a personal environment.

What will you miss the most about Bard? All my friends who shared with me the destiny of Kline pizza-eaters.

What are you most looking forward to about going home? Reclaiming my room from my brother and hitting Castro Bistro coffee shop with my friends in Budapest.

What is one really valuable thing you learned this year? I took some studio arts classes which are really dear for me and learned things I never expected to as a social science major.

What would have improved your experience at Bard? Well, I really can't complain...Although I think I was the only person on campus who drove 0 miles this year with a valid driving licence...Probably a car would have taken us even further than Red Hook and Tivoli.



NEESHA FAKIR, South Africa

What do you think your fondest memory of Bard will be? My fondest memories of Bard will be the numerous successes and fun times that I had with my wonderful debate team traveling to many locations in American Academia, hitting the best teams with our unusual arguments. My happiest memories also emerged out of the beautiful friendships that I have built with all of my professors and all my friends.

What will you miss the most about Bard? I am going to severely miss my debate team and my debate family. Those individuals are the epitome of my time at Bard, I love them. I am going to miss my wonderful professors, especially those in Africana Studies, I am going to miss the very enlightening and stimulating discussions with all my cohorts and in all my classes, and I am going to deeply miss all the freshmen. I will definitely miss all the amazing activists here, especially my friends in the Bard Democrats.

What are you most looking forward to about going home? I am not going home as yet as I have an internship in DC, but honestly I am not looking forward to going home at all.

What is one really valuable thing you learned this year? I have definitely learned to engage and tackle more critical discourses and stimulating intellectual challenges. I also think that my experiences and travels with the hurricane relief group in New Orleans made me more aware of the kind of human solidarity that exists in times of crisis, and the powerful agency that exists in individuals.

What would have improved your experience at Bard? I think I would have probably benefited more if I had gotten to know more faculty members whose knowledge could have proved very useful to my academics and career.

Dreaming of Better Satire

BY TOM HOUSEMAN

Satire is a genre rarely explored by Hollywood. This trend is rather surprising, considering our laughable political situation, as well as the myriad of ridiculous pop icons floating around. Perhaps it is the fear that movie studios have of offending people (which might mean poor box office), but apart from the few satirical gems, namely Michael Moore's *Canadian Bacon*, quality satire is nowhere to be found in movie theaters. 2006 hoped to remedy this situation, and after the success of *Thank You for Smoking*, hopes were high for *American Dreamz*, a satire of both pop culture and the president, directed by Paul Weitz, best known for the comedies *American Pie* and *About a Boy*. Sadly, these hopes were misplaced, as *American Dreamz* fails to build on a premise with potential, and then proceeds to miss the boat completely in terms of satire, ending up being more of an imitation. *Thank You for Smoking*, which, while being terribly funny, didn't have the claws needed to make for great satire, makes *American Dreamz* look like Bambi trying to walk on a frozen pond.

Martin Tweed (Hugh Grant) is the host of the hugely popular show *American Dreamz*, and is as thinly veiled an imitation of Simon Cowell as his show is of *American Idol*. Sally Kendoo (Mandy Moore) is a small town girl with dreams of being hugely famous that so control her life that she dumps her simpleton boyfriend (Chris Klein) and then gets back together with him when she gets picked to be on *American Dreamz*, as she believes his veteran status will make for good publicity. Omer (Sam Golzari) is a Muslim who accidentally ends up getting picked to be on the show, and then gets contacted by terrorists who want to use him for their nefarious plans. President Staton (Dennis Quaid) has a mental breakdown when he actually reads a newspaper and realizes that the

world is far more complicated than he realized when he actually reads the newspaper, and his chief of staff (Willem Dafoe) decides that getting him to co-host the *American Dreamz* finale will make for great publicity. When these crazy characters come together, will the consequences be hilarious and unexpected? Sort of.

American Dreamz is not exactly a bad movie, although it certainly isn't good. What it is is occasionally clever and sometimes entertaining, but not much else. The plot drags through much of the first half as Weitz meticulously sets up the inordinately complicated premise, and then shows promise in the second half, as things pick up. The direction is solid, keeping things moving and getting some great reactions from characters that help pick up laughs, but it cannot overcome the screenplay. The situations set up in the film are ridiculous and unbelievable, and the dialogue is often absurd, featuring lines that not even stereotypes and clichés would say. Everything about this film is hit-and-miss, as some of the jokes produce solid laughs while others fall flat.



The hit-and-miss quality also applies to the performances Mandy Moore continually proves that she is a competent but unspectacular actress; she is believable as Sally Kendoo, although she could have had more fun with the part instead of taking it quite so seriously, and her singing is superb, although not used often enough in the

film. Sam Golzari, who makes his feature film debut, is also good enough, although not particularly memorable. The high point of the film is Hugh Grant's performance, which only occasionally dips into the Hugh Grant sleaze-bag clichés. Grant gave the best performance of his career in *About a Boy*, and while he does not match that here, he is still impressive. Some of the minor performances are quite memorable, especially John Cho (a Paul Weitz regular) as Tweed's assistant, and Adam Busch as a hilarious Hasidic Jew who is also a contestant on the show. The worst performances are all rather surprising, considering they come from well respected and generally great actors. Dennis Quaid, Willem Dafoe, and Marcia Gay Harden, as the President, his chief of staff, and the First Lady, all seem to be just going through the motions, never really bringing their characters to life, which drags down the third of the film that is already the weakest.

As a comedy, *American Dreamz* can be deemed average, as it does manage to entertain adequately. However, as a satire, the film is an utter failure. Satire is supposed to draw attention to and emphasize flaws in its subject and attempt to find solutions to them, but *American Dreamz* is merely content to point out the obvious. "Hey, a lot of people watch that show *American Idol*," says the film, to which the audience responds, "yup." "President Bush only says what other people tell him to say" shouts the film from a rooftop, and the audience suppresses a yawn before saying "uh-huh." The film only uses *American Idol* as a pretext for its plot, never really examining the source of its overwhelming popularity. Even Steven Trask's clever songs, which the contestants sing during auditions and which are apparently meant to poke fun at pop music, fail to prove their point, as they just end up sounding like actual pop songs, not exaggerations. If *American Dreamz* had something important to say about American culture, it should have come out and said it, and if it didn't, it shouldn't have pretended that it did. Without any real bite to it, *American Dreamz* just meanders along, occasionally dropping a clever line or singing a fun song, until its ridiculous ending, and then wraps up in predictable fashion, showing where each character ended up after the events of the film. If *American Dreamz* weren't so by the numbers, it could have been a good movie, but instead Paul Weitz will just have to keep on dreaming.

Summer is Hot; So Are These Concerts

BY OMER SHAH

There are a lot of really noteworthy tours running through America this summer, so if America is where you'll be this summer, and you live in some reasonable city, or are willing to travel, keep your heads up. It's pretty hard to get me to the local Amphitheater or Stadium for live music, but some of these shows tempt me, and maybe you'll be tempted as well. If ten dollar beers aren't your bag there's always love for our non-Clear Channel venues. Summer also means tons of festivals. So here's the run down of everything important that I felt like writing about:

Nine Inch Nails/ Bauhaus/ Peaches/ TV on the Radio: My early 90s goth jaw dropped when I saw this lineup. With Peaches and TV on the Radio sharing the opening duties on separate legs of the tour, it's hard to say no. However, it seems a bit silly for Bauhaus to be opening for Nine Inch Nails. Though Nine Inch Nails is the big draw, Trent Reznor should still show respect to his elders. In any event, the downside of these shows is that you'll have to trek to your local Tommy Hilfiger Amphitheater and shell out some 50 bucks for a seated Nine Inch Nails show. I think I'll pass and hope to catch Peaches headline on a night off in New York.

Intonation Music Festival (June 24 - 25): Intonation was last year's Pitchfork festival, but now Pitchfork has let Intonation be taken over by Vice Magazine. The Streets and The Stills are headlining night one and Bloc Party and Dead Prez are on duty for night two. Other exciting acts are Lady Sovereign, Jose Gonzalez, Erase Errata, Annie, and many more. Tickets are \$20 for single day passes and \$35 for two day passes. Which is pretty awesome considering \$20 - 30 is what you'd throw down to catch any of these headliners in New York.

Pitchfork Music Festival (July 29 - 30): Pitchfork's new self-titled festival is pretty rad, and again, cheap. They've got Silver Jews, The Futureheads, Band of Horses, Man Man, and Matmos lined up for day one. And day two is headed by Brazil's recently resurrected Os Mutantes, Spoon, Jens Lekman, Tapes 'n Tapes, Diplo, and many more to be announced.

Homo-a-GoGo (August 1 - 6): Olympia's biennial event for queer independent music, art, and activism is looking really amazing this summer. With music from Amy Ray, Tender Forever, Xiu Xiu, Lovers, The Gossip, Shoplifting, Hey Willpower, and Lesbians on X. Plus tons of films, artists, spoken word, and other performers.



Lollapalooza (August 4 - 6): After failed attempts at making the Lollapalooza festival a traveling show, the festival is settling in Chicago for yet another summer. The festival seems bigger than ever with 130 bands on eight stages, boasting headliners such as Red Hot Chili Peppers, Kanye West, Manu Chao, and Wilco. However the real draw for me would be catching Sleater-Kinney's set before they tire of touring for *The Woods*. Some other noteworthy acts are The Shins, Built to Spill, Gnarl Barkley, The Rapture, and just about every Arts & Crafts band ever. I guess what rules about the festival is that it's 40 dollars for a three day pass. So if you're in the midwest area, I'd definitely check Lollapalooza out.

Central Park Summerstage/River to River: Chicago doesn't get it all. New York has a lot of awesome free shows at its various parks and other venues around the city. Summerstage has some other shows which aren't free as well. Be sure to catch: Prefuse 73, Lady Sovereign, Jose Gonzales, and Feist, all for free. If you're willing to shell out some money, check out Moe, Ani DiFranco, Common, Clap Your Hands and Say Yeah, Fiona Apple,

Damien Rice and the New Pornographers to name a few. More Summerstage shows to be announced next week. River to River is a series of more free concerts in NYC parks and other NYC locations. They booked some really exciting shows this summer. Be sure to check out: Hot Chip, The Hold Steady, Ted Leo & The Pharmacists, Super Furry Animals, Mates of State, Okkervil River, eels & Smoosh, Son Volt, and Belle & Sebastian. I'll definitely try to see Belle & Sebastian.

Final Fantasy: Owen Pallett of Arcade Fire fame is doing a brief tour, stopping in New York's Tonic on June 24th. After hearing his latest, "He Poos Clouds," I definitely will not pass up a chance to see him.

Diplo / CSS/ Bonde Do Role: I'm not sure this is something I need to see, but it could be fun. My boyfriend, the internet, is already calling this the hottest tour of the summer. I'm not really sure I'm hipster enough for this sort of event. Basically, Diplo is on tour with two Brazilian dance groups, most memorable for me is Cansei de Ser Sexy (CSS) with pop referential songs such as "Let's Make Love and Listen to Death From Above" and "I Wanna Be Your J.Lo" ala Sleater-Kinney's "I Wanna Be Your Joey Romone." The tour stops at Manhattan's Avalon and Brooklyn's Warsaw in late July and is stopping in a number of other locations across the country.

Team Dresch: Queercore legend Team Dresch is finally back together with all its original members, and will be heading out early summer in the Northwest. The group will stop by the East coast to play Manhattan's Knitting Factory and Brooklyn's Southpaw. If you're not there, you're probably heterosexual.

Morrissey: The Moz doesn't have any dates written in for the United States yet. He's doing heavy duty touring in the UK and Europe for his latest awesome release, *The Ringleader of the Tormentors*. We all continue to be shocked and amazed at how Morrissey continues to release listenable music. However, rumor has it that he'll only be doing four US shows. One at Madison Square Garden, one in LA, and two shows in the state of Oklahoma.

Radiohead: The band is back in action this summer. The group is headlining hippie cum-hipster fest, Bonnaroo, this June. However, the group also has two night stands confirmed in Chicago and Boston. Rumor has it that the group will be at the Madison Square Garden Theater in early June for two evenings. The internet also informs me that there will be some sort of digital release of new music in June or July.

For all your concert needs, check out ohmyrockness.com.

They Know How To Transform

BY HENRY CASEY

Right around the time when Spring looks like Spring at Bard, some record comes out and slaps you upside the head and asks, "What have you been wasting your time listening to when you should have been listening to me?" Last year, it was Beck's *Guero*, which still holds replay value. This year, Cee-Lo Green has stepped up to the #1 spot, with Danger Mouse (mastermind of the Grey album and more recently a Gorillaz beatsmith) riding shotty.



Your ears are blown wide open as Gnarls Barkley screams into them, his war cry, also possibly the motto of the album *St. Elsewhere* is simply the following: "I, I, I, AI-AI-AI, KNOW HOW TO TRANSFORM, I TRANSFORM, I'LL TRANSFORM, I'M A TRANSFORMER!"

Gnarls Barkley is Cee-Lo and Danger Mouse. Gnarls Barkley creates a new genre that will rid the world of Britney Spears' husband, and maybe Britney if we're lucky. Gnarls Barkley is a pen pal of legendary rock critic Lester Bangs. Gnarls Barkley is the springtime-I-finished-my-stupid-senior-project soundtrack. There is no album that fits the weather and emotions of the past week better than *St. Elsewhere*. Gnarls Barkley is responsible for "Crazy," the catchiest single of the decade.

I've been playing that song since October, and it is still the most fucking amazing thing ever.

I'm not sure what kind of sticky-icky Cee-Lo Green and Danger Mouse were smoking when they came up with each of the amazing aspects of their new collaborative effort, *St. Elsewhere*, released under the name Gnarls Barkley, but I bet it was good. The beats are a big step up for Danger Mouse, something I attribute to Cee-Lo's instinct, meshing both of their retro styles in a marriage of music.

If you haven't heard "Crazy" yet, I wonder if you're deaf or something. My bad if you are. The song is the music equivalent of an atomic bomb with a viral dirty bomb tucked inside. You play it for someone, and they'll probably like it. Even though Gnarls Barkley is an unknown name, "Crazy" killed so hard in the UK that the song became the first #1 single based on downloads alone.

Another thrilling, transformative

motion on the album is the cover of "Gone Daddy Gone," originally by The Violent Femmes. The song moves so smoothly and so fast that even some of my music geek friends have thought it was a Gnarls original. It carries the job of being one of the first songs after "Crazy" is over, and with an upbeat motion, it carries the listener further down the rabbit hole.

If one lesson I've learned at Bard is not true in music, it is the lesson that brevity is good. In repeated listenings of "Feng Shui"—one of the most addictive tracks on the record—I feel like this song should be three, even four minutes (the song is a paltry 1:26). No matter where you find yourself in the album though, Cee-Lo's crooning and Danger's beats make the album feel like home. It's a great place to stay, *St. Elsewhere*, and I just might live here.

Stop Wasting Taste

BY NOAH WESTON

If I asked Bard students what they knew about White House press secretary, Tony Snow, at the most, fifty people might recognize the name. You can be damn sure, though, that everybody will have seen the trailer for *Snakes On a Plane*. We laugh endlessly about it and a million other things that are "so bad that they're funny." I wonder why we can no longer just let things be stupid. Now, we are so entrenched in campy irony, that we cannot even dislike something without finding some kitsch-y appeal to it. It's getting so bad that it's like almost good. But not really.

Pathetically, we have become slavishly beholden to popular schlock culture as a source of ironic humor. Today, we pee on ourselves over *Snakes On a Plane*, but tomorrow, we will have found something even dumber onto which we. I bet that if Nick Cannon made a movie called *Oh Snap! I Got a Bug in My Mouth!*, it would take the internet and the minds of every college student and postgraduate twenty something by storm. All the while, we laugh as movies get shittier and limit the potential for growth in the popular arts.

Though it seems hilarious that such awful movies are actually made and even popular (but only among "idiots" who like things sincerely), we depend on them for hours of referential laughter, whether or not we generate anything new or interesting to take the place of lame films, music, or television programming. In this respect, the entertainment industry has made fools out of us, while raking in billions of dollars at the same time. I wonder what would happen, how-

ever, if the hip internet generation spent less time giggling over wack movies and diverted that energy to reading a newspaper, writing a play, making a puppet (maybe not), just anything to stop the self-eating snake of our campy pop culture fixation.

There are so many genuinely, affirmatively funny films and television shows, that we do not have to waste our time with unintentionally humorous media. The same goes for good music versus atrocious songs that many Bard kids would listen to because, again, "they're so bad that they're great." On the contrary, shittiness at its height does not make for greatness, but rather just a lot of shittiness. We may chuckle over how awful *Snakes On a Plane* is with our friends, but did we gain anything by focusing our attention on it for longer than the thirty seconds it deserves? No. We play ourselves like chumps with nothing better to talk about aside from how stupid something is.



It is an incredible privilege, historically and globally speaking, to enjoy as much freedom of choice in media as we do, and we do ourselves a great disservice in wasting it. So the next time some stupid movie trailer passes your way, it's fine to just laugh, get over it, and let it fade into obscurity. We will all be better off for it. And remember, this summer, go see *Oh Snap! I Got a Bug in My Mouth!* in a theatre near you. I hear Nick Cannon gets a nasty bug like totally in his mouth.

Why, Kiefer, Why?

BY MARY HARDING

Despite the previews, I seriously believed that *The Sentinel* was going to be a good flick. Granted, I was not expecting a masterpiece of contemporary cinema, but I was expecting to be entertained. The tag line, which stated: "In 141 years, there has never been a traitor in the Secret Service... until now," seemed promising. I was especially excited that Kiefer Sutherland, (Jack Bauer on Fox's *24*), seemed to be poised to finally achieve film success. However, this film is not only horrible, but actually features some of the worst acting I have seen in a while.

Michael Douglas portrays Pete Garrison, a secret service agent who has dedicated his whole life to protecting the first family, but who becomes suspected of planning to kill the President. Kiefer Sutherland plays David Breckinridge, a threat investigator who is assigned to apprehend Douglas before the suspected assassination. He is accompanied by Jill Marin, a rookie agent played by Eva Longoria (*Desperate Housewives*). The twist is that David used to be Pete's protégé and best friend, but now the two are enemies (For some reason David believes Pete had an affair with his wife, though it is never explained why he believes that). It's clear from the beginning that Pete has nothing to do with the plot to kill the President, but is being

framed by another agent. Pete manages to escape before being arrested and of course, seeks to prove his innocence.

Douglas, who has been M.I.A. for about three years being a stay-at-home dad, is the only slightly redeeming quality about this film. He successfully manages to make Pete a smart and clever character, even if he



has no one else to really work with. This film is completely predictable, insipid, and terribly written. While I could have entirely focused on how bad Eva Longoria is, I will try to sum my opinion in one statement: Stick to showing your ass on TV and your career will last longer. Jill is a completely nondescript character, but Longoria is obviously trying to make the jump from TV to film (though

she fails miserably). Still, my major disappointment was in observing Kiefer Sutherland. Sutherland, who has done absolutely brilliant work over the last five years on *24*, gives a completely flat and uninspired performance as David. Now, this could be blamed on the horrible dialogue he is subjected to recite, but it does not explain why he never manages to make David a believable character. Just by watching him on screen, I got the sense that he was always somewhere else in his head; anywhere but in the head of David.

This film was directed by Clark Johnson (*S.W.A.T.*—so go figure this movie would be bad) and was adapted by George Nolfi (from Gerald Petievch's novel of the same name). The screenplay is void of character and plot development, and it never believably represents the secret service (For example, the agent who is actually conspiring to kill the president does not understand the consequences of his actions, as if it was completely incomprehensible to him). The only consolation I received after having viewed the film is hearing the rumor that Kim Basinger enjoyed working with Kiefer Sutherland so much that she is now joining him on the next season of *24*. While the failure of this film will do little harm to the career of Michael Douglas, it appears Mr. Sutherland is still not ready to make the jump to a solid film career. However, he has now officially become the highest paid actor on TV, having just signed a renewal contract with Fox to stay on *24* for the next three years. Hopefully, within that time Sutherland can finally reach his potential. For now, he remains Jack Bauer.

Not Quite, Virginia

by Tom Houseman

I'm not that into music; I've found that my movie obsession has taken up so much of my time that I'm only able to have a passable interest in music. Still, I love The Dresden Dolls more than *Citizen Kane*, *Casablanca*, and *The Godfather* combined. For those of you who have so far been deprived of their glory, The Dresden Dolls are a two-person band from Boston, consisting of singer and pianist Amanda Palmer, and drummer Brian Viglione. They define their music as "Brechtian Punk Cabaret," which in lay terms means "the craziest, most awesome shit you've ever heard times infinity." Their first LP, *Dresden Dolls*, was one of the most brilliant albums I have ever heard, featuring one mind-blowing song after another, as their incredibly original style makes for fresh and exciting music. "Girl Anachronism" might just be my favorite song ever, and everything else on that CD, from "Good Day" to "Truce," fills my heart with joy, and sometimes seriously creeps me out.



So I was, of course, waiting with baited breath for their new album, *Yes, Virginia*, and I bought it from iTunes the day it came out (The Dresden Dolls is the only band I'm willing to give money to anymore). While I had heard a few of the songs on the album from live tracks and the preview album, much of the cd was new to me, and I have to admit that I was pleased but disappointed. *Yes, Virginia* is a very good album, but it doesn't seem to have the originality and creativity that *Dresden Dolls* had. While many of The Dresden Dolls songs feature intense repetition, some of their newer songs abuse this tool, which weakens its effect. Also, there are some mediocre songs on the album, while their first album had only one, the unusual "672."

Yes, Virginia starts off strong with "Sex Changes," a fast and fun song that might be about exactly what it sounds like it would be (it's hard to tell with the Dresden Dolls). In fact, the songs on the first half of the album are only

slightly below the level of *Dresden Dolls*, although only one song could be described as great: "Dirty Business," an intense look at how some women act in relationships. "My Alcoholic Friends" is a fun song, and "Modern Moonlight" represents a great change of pace in terms of The Dresden Dolls' usual music, a fascinating mix of heavy and light sounds. "Delilah," while not nearly as good as the live version I heard, is still a captivating song, and is the only good slow song on the album.

After "Dirty Business," however, the album falters with "First Orgasm." *Dresden Dolls* featured the fun but deceptively depressing song "Coin-operated Boy," which was about preferring sex toys to human contact. "First Orgasm" is basically the same thing, but is very slow and gets tedious quickly, marking one of the low points in the album. Things pick up after that though, with "Mrs. O," a song that is representative of the off-beat, quirky but awesome lyrics and music for which the Dresden Dolls are known. But overall, the second half of the album is a major letdown; "Shores of California" and "Me and the Minibar" are average at best, and "Sing" is easily the worst song The Dresden Dolls have recorded to date. Of the last six songs, the only high point is the delightfully dark "Mandy Goes to Med School," which is about a backdoor abortionist, and is exemplary of it. It features some of the best lyrics The Dresden Dolls have written, and the music does a great job of belying the morbid tone of the lyrics. The Dresden Dolls are known for upbeat music that belies depressing themes, as well as the use of staccato to grab the listener's attention, and "Mandy Goes to Med School" is a perfect example of that.

If I were reviewing any other album, I would be raving and possibly drooling a little bit, but I can't bring myself to do either of those things when I remember how brilliant *Dresden Dolls* was. *Yes, Virginia* is undeniably a very good album, but I can't help but demand more from The Dresden Dolls. The few flashes of brilliance on the album only whet my appetite and make the other songs seem even worse by comparison. The Dresden Dolls have the incredible ability to keep their distinct tone in their music without having every song sound the same, and on *Dresden Dolls*, the slow and unnerving songs like "Missed Me" contrast wonderfully with the fast-paced songs like "Bad Habit." But on *Yes, Virginia*, the slow songs just drag because they don't seem to be trying anything new. I still recommend *Yes, Virginia*, if just for the outstanding trio of "Dirty Business," "Mrs. O," and "Mandy Goes to Med School." However, be warned, fans of The Dresden Dolls will be disappointed, because as good as this album is, it just doesn't hold up in comparison to *Dresden Dolls*.

Rihanna Strikes Again!

By NICHOLAS UGBODE

It hasn't even been a year since her first record debuted, but Rihanna is back with another album that promises to match, if not out-do, her first. Her first album, *Music of the Sun* was released in August, 2005 and was spearheaded by the hit singles "Pon de Replay" and "If It's Lovin' That You Want." These songs were very well received and apparently were just a small sample of what Rihanna had in store for the New Year. The single "Pon de Replay" was a huge floor-filler and if its huge success was any indication, her new album *A Girl Like Me* is going to be great as well.

It's worth mentioning that there is currently a "spot" that remains somewhat unclaimed in modern pop music. This is the slot formerly filled by the likes of Aaliyah or TLC or that type of "girl" (singer/dancer) and in the absence of this performer, the music world is obviously trying to compensate by introducing a new "it girl" for the R&B world. That being said, we can understand why Jay Z's company, Def Jam (The record label Rihanna is signed to) would invest so much time and money into an artist who is just budding. Essentially the goal is to transform Rihanna from ingénue to bonafide artist in just two albums. The road isn't as clear as they might hope, however, with the likes of Ciara running around out there.

That being said, we can focus on the new album, *A Girl Like Me*, which was released on April 25, 2006. The first single from the album is "S.O.S. (Rescue Me)." The track takes a sample from the 80's classic "Tainted Love" by Soft Cell, which adds a kind of familiarity to the song. Essentially, "S.O.S." is a really great dance song and Rihanna has done a great job complementing her already good musical record. The smash hit

song, for which a music video has been released, was also used by Nike to market their new "Rock Star Workout" and a dance inspired clothing line, which opens up endorsements galore for the Barbados born singer.

In keeping with her first album, the general tone of this album is sometimes geared towards the dance variety and sometimes it is more somber and deals with issues arising from losing love or the like. Good songs that mirror the somber side of her album are: "We Ride," which is a really pretty song, "A Girl Like Me" and "Selfish Girl." This album tends towards the lovey dovey side a little lot too much for me and that's the major issue I had with it. The songs, save for three or four, were all about her past loves or losing love or love letters. Every kind of permutation one could think of which refers to her and love, was evoked by most of the songs on this album. Ultimately, this was a big detriment to the overall quality of the album.



Having said that, the other song, besides "S.O.S.," which was absolutely awesome on this album was "Break it off" (Featuring Sean Paul). This song is a really amazing display of not only what Rihanna can do, but also what a great collaborator she can be. The song, although initially a little abrupt and busy, is not tedious in the least. It is the kind of song you listen to a bunch of times in a row because twice just can't be enough. Rihanna's singing mixed with Sean Paul's great verses, are really good and compliment the overall composition of the song. This is by far my favorite track from the album. So ultimately, this is a good second album and Rihanna's looking like she's here to stay.

Pierre Boulez

By DAVID GUTKIN

Although it now seems quite distant, the avant-garde dream of Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen, along with other members of the post-World War II "Darmstadt circle," was of a total reinvention of musical language. Boulez, perhaps more than anyone, saw the destruction of the past as necessary for the creation of a new aesthetic. He writes: "History, as it is made by great composers, is not a history of conservation but of destruction—even while cherishing what has been destroyed." Boulez's three piano sonatas, written between 1946 and 1957, trace his development from somewhat traditional models to the extreme boundary of Western conceptions of the musical "work." Deutsche Grammophon's recent release, which includes all three sonatas and features the young pianist Paavali Jumppanen, is a fine introduction to Boulez's fascinating body of work.

In his scathing 1952 obituary "Schoenberg is Dead," Boulez articulated his revolt against musical conservatism and nostalgia. While recognizing the importance of Schoenberg's radical atonal and serial discoveries, Boulez criticized him for his attachment to past musical forms and techniques (sonata form, traditional rhythms, motivic and thematic writing, etc.). But in 1946, when he

wrote the *First Sonata*, Boulez was still working largely within a traditional framework. The two movement sonata employs Schoenberg's innovative system of serial, or twelve-tone, composition, in which the twelve notes of the Western scale are treated as a unit, subject to various permutations, resulting in 48 "rows." Following Schoenberg's example of a conservative, "thematic" treatment of the row, melodic motivic function permeates the first movement, as the interval of a minor sixth consistently recurs. Nevertheless, the work shows considerable originality in areas of rhythm and texture. Jumppanen's performance is both delicate and exciting. Upon a first listen, what struck me about his playing was its exceptionally even balance throughout registers.

If the *First Sonata* hints at Boulez's distinctive talents, the *Second Sonata* (1948) approaches their mature realization. This work is a violent farewell to traditional procedures and significantly expands notions of serial writing. Boulez, reminiscing about this seminal piece some thirty years later, speaks of its "explosive, disintegrating character," and its implicit "destruction of...classical moulds..." In the *Second Sonata*, Boulez employs past techniques, such as fugue, canon, and the standard four movement sonata form. But if he constructs the piece on these historic foundations, he also destroys the foundations themselves. Through an incredible density of notes and ever shifting rhythms, the *Second Sonata* radically dissolves any recognizable devices.

The first movement is striking for its aggressive

energy and rhythmic complexity. It is also one of the most difficult feats in the piano repertoire. Throughout the movement, there are frequent long trills, both in bass and treble registers, hinting at their later employment as an integral component of Boulez's mature, static sound-world. Executing these trills with grace, Jumppanen's performance is accurate and facile. Unfortunately, I couldn't help comparing it unfavorably to Maurizio Pollini's brilliant recording from 1978, also on Deutsche Grammophon. Jumppanen, in comparison, lacks the volcanic dynamic range of Pollini. However, I do like Jumppanen's exquisite playing in the slower second movement, in which Boulez's debt to Debussy is more discernable than in Pollini's rendition.

In the magnificent fourth and final movement, a low fugal introduction gives way to an initially mercurial, and eventually frenzied development. The sonata ends with a soft and slow epilogue. With violence echoing like a residual memory, the epilogue is uncannily tranquil, as if one were surveying the wreckage of a leveled city. Musical tradition has been reduced to rubble. The same sensitivity Jumppanen exhibits in the second movement is found in his playing of the epilogue.

After the *Second Sonata*, Boulez never again made clear use of traditional forms. That the *Third Sonata* (1955-57) retains the title "sonata" is almost a joke. Rather than "movements" Boulez's sonata is made up of "formants," which themselves are made of smaller subsections.

Continued on Page 9

Never Too Soon for Propaganda

BY KIRIANNNA BUTEAU

This issue, I'm taking a break from talking about movies I have seen; instead, I'm going to talk about a movie that I have no intention of seeing at all.

United 93 is coming out the day after I'll have written this article. By the time you're reading this it will already be out. Given the name and given events that happened in 2001 in which United Flight 93 played a notable role, it would be superfluous to speculate on the movie's plot, so I don't feel any particular need to go "find out what happens." Flight 93 is going to crash in Pennsylvania and a lot of people are going to die; there are some plausible conspiracy theories out there in such films as *Loose Change*, but *Loose Change* wasn't released at the Hudson Valley Mall.



But hey, I knew how *Titanic* was going to end, and didn't I see that? Yes, I did. However, since the September 11 attacks were terrible but inherently political acts, and they similarly became a political monopoly for the US government, the very fact that the plots for this movie is predictable means that it will have an inherent political nature, too, and that's the real reason for me avoiding it like the plague. Recently when I was in a movie theatre waiting for the feature presentation, there was a series of commercial/blurbs like what most big theatres seem to have nowadays, and one was about *United 93*—it had the director Paul Greengrass and a few family members of the victims talking about how they'd agreed it wasn't too soon to make a movie about 9/11, so they were hoping viewers would be okay with it. I didn't lose anyone that I knew in the attacks, so maybe I'm less sensitive, but honestly, I think the "too soon" argument is valid but also far from the sole problem I find with making a movie about this tragedy.

Take *Pearl Harbor*, for example. Unlike many other World War II movies, it was made long after the Pearl Harbor attack occurred, but it

was still awful, not just because of the shitty script but because of the way it dehumanized the Japanese military forces. Dehumanization of "the enemy" is not just going to happen in explicitly propagandistic war movies released during the actual war they portray; it will happen as long as there are people who think of wars in "us vs. them" terms. There are some fantastic war movies out there that do break down such boundaries, especially movies pertaining to Vietnam, but if somebody made a movie about September 11, 2001 that got released in 2401, I wouldn't assume that they'd avoid trends like dehumanization of Arabs and jingoistic patriotism unless by then the US had overcome its enormous difficulties in those areas. So I don't really care that *United 93* is coming out a little less than five years after what it's depicting. I'm not as concerned about breaking down in the theatre due to post-traumatic flashbacks as I am about breaking down due to witnessing sheer ignorance.

Some further clarification is probably needed. For one thing, like at least some of the Bard community, I don't consider getting labeled "anti-American" to be a bad thing unless it's meant to imply that I masturbate to the idea of killing thousands of innocent people in order to fight the Great Satan of America™. As anyone who knows me can testify, I'm not a fan of people dying, and I abhor

fear tactics (i.e. terrorism) whether they get employed by governments or those who fight them. However, I do consider it sheer ignorance to willfully discount the opinions of terrorists simply on the basis that they are terrorists who hold them, and while there are some brave filmmakers and actors in Hollywood who dare to use popular cinema for the purposes of dispelling ignorance, I've said before and will say again that not all of Hollywood is left-leaning, plus even lefty directors (like Oliver Stone, director of the upcoming film *World Trade Center*) may find their messages dampened by conservative, corporate-owned studios. Greengrass' film may have merit and intelligence, but he isn't as famously liberal as Stone, and even if he were, I won't see a movie just because a liberal director made it, since what I'd want to see in a 9/11 movie would be not just a realistic portrayal of the terrorists but also a critical portrayal of America itself, and so many liberals make a point of "patriotic criticism" that sometimes the "patriotic" gets in the way of fully pursuing the "criticism." ends you won't see me writing a *United 93* review, and I daresay I'm edgy about seeing *World Trade Center* as well.

Boulez, Continued from Page 8

Although Boulez planned to write five formants, only two were completed, and the work is still officially unfinished. In the *Third Sonata*, Boulez employs serial principles, but in a more abstract manner: the rows have collapsed in on themselves and been rendered undetectable. The sound space is original and hard to describe. It is magical in its resonance, interspersed by fleeting percussive strains.

Along with Stockhausen's *Klavierstück XI*, Boulez's *Third Sonata* is one of the classic "open form" works. This

means, in Boulez's work, that the performer has considerable freedom to choose tempo, order of subsections within a formant, order of content within a subsection, and whether to include or omit sections. However, the work is by no means improvised; the performer must follow strict rules (included in a separate pamphlet) about how and when to exercise freedom. Through the chance procedures in the *Third Sonata*, Boulez attempts to realize his frequently mentioned goal of "labyrinthine" structure, and in this

A Final Farewell to Art At Bard

BY HENRY CASEY

An unusual thing happened: during the last weeks before my project was due, typically the busiest weeks imaginable, I managed to make room for as many artistic endeavors I could fit into a schedule on the edge of implosion. I wasn't able to see everything, so my apologies to those acts I missed, between deadline and overlapping events it was hard enough to see this much, but I was able to attend a lot of events.

The Bard Playwright's Festival

To Grandmother's House We Go, written by Misty Seemans ('06) started off with a tired theme—youth (Sasha Winters '08) moves to the south to spend time with crazy hick relative (Nick Friedman '09) and realizes that everybody in the south is crazy—gives the theme a few novel twists but doesn't provide anything great to end on. The twists in question are men playing women characters and vice versa. While Rachel Faison ('08) does a good job playing the male roles of Doctor Scott and Priest, Trevor McGinn ('08) and Nicholas Friedman do much more hilarious work playing Barbarette the beautician and Eleanor, the grandmother. The play ends with a retelling of the Little Red Riding Hood story, and I still don't know why.

When *The Long and Short Of It*, written by Raphael Bob-Waksberg ('06), started off with a scene that told the audience little more than the fact that we were going to see something about twenty-somethings, I was a little nervous. But, the fact that they are in New York City really doesn't mean anything: the characters will be the selling point. The friendly rivalry for Monica (Emma Hill '07) between Jeff (Jesse Myerson '08) and Nick (Dan Wilbur '09) was very well put together: betrayal hit all the right beats, camaraderie and disloyalty intermingled, and the whole thing could make any Senior worry about life after graduation. It left me thanking the playwright and hoping I can get a hand on the play itself. Raphael's wordplay was spot on and very quotable.

An Exhausting Temptation, written by Joshua Koenigsberg ('06) starring Ruy Iskandar ('07), Julia Tadlock ('06), Evan Spigelman ('09) and Shira Sandler ('06) was far and away my favorite play of the semester. The story is that of a married couple, probably on the brink of divorce. One theater major—who prefaced their statement by saying that they are a Bard Theater Snob—said it was definitely the best student play they had seen at Bard. Unlike many of the other plays I've seen here, it never shied from heartfelt sincerity. Iskandar proved he is a powerful talent of the department, with amazing range. In addition, Mr. Koenigsberg's play was amazingly well written, providing each character with enough thought and depth.

I'm not sure what the *10:Minute Theater Festival* did for me aside from prove that—when dealing with very surreal material—sometimes I don't know shit about theater. None of the plays were written by theater majors, but that didn't stop Adam Janos ('06), Robyn Bianconi ('07), Gracie Leavitt ('06), and Braden

Marks ('06) from putting together some severely entertaining, if not often confusing plays. The dynamic of Markus Paminger ('07) and Matthew Wood ('06) during Robyn's *The Space In-Between* stuck out to me for being well played. Overall, the playwright's festival—in its three nights—was a great success, and I wish I could be here for next year's iteration.

Assorted Others

I saw the first night of the *Senior Photo Exhibitions at Woods Studio*, and Andy Hardman's ('06) exhibition knocked me like a sonic boom from Guile. Any opening though, that has Luc Sante DJ'ing the festivity is going to rock. As the night progressed, I was more and more enamored with a single photo. The shot in question is of a road turning upward and an RV near the side of the road. The road ahead is a scary fucking sight to any senior, I'll admit. Hardman's eye for the moment is phenomenal, and I made a point to write in the guest book and to take a postcard/ad.

Most of the times when I've seen a bunch of my friends in their underpants in an "orgy scene," I've either been shocked or awed. During *Reefer Madness* on the other hand, the scene was—how do I put this—a highlight of my last month at Bard. Matthew O'Koren ('09) was a great Jimmy to center the performance around. Also of note was Veronica Hunsinger-Loe ('09) who played a variety of characters, including an announcer who presented signs to the audience; her maniacal laugh was definitely the laugh of someone ruined by the *Madness*. This was the first of two Old Gym performances that didn't make me nostalgic for "the way shit used to be." With the walls spray painted black, I remember the graffiti, the good old days.

I was soon distracted from the stupid décor when Christine Dominguez ('06) took to the stage. I'm happy to say that over the last few years I've seen Christine grow from a great talent, to a pillar of the Bard musician community. Her presence is unrivaled on stage. Her deliberate mood progression from song to song is not obvious, but it works as well as it can. The sight and sound, though, of her and Kate Myers ('06) on stage performing at the same time was a neutron bomb of spectacular. I'll never forget her set that night. From the slow pace beginning on the keyboard, to her guitar fueled ensemble masterpieces later in the set, it was a set of amazing moments, I only wish I could have focused a whole article on it.

On Saturday night, I found myself back in the old gym, for the surprisingly brief *ARTHUR! Sword in the Stone at the Cellular Level*. With a cast of my favorite insane classmates, from the brilliantly intimidating Charley Lanning ('08), to the unpredictably insane Jay Glazer ('07), I was astonished as what I perceived to be a modern turn on the King Arthur story turned my mind inside out. Greg Fox ('08), (former Flash Monster, current beat smith) was the centerpiece of the play and he killed as Arthur. Rocking a cowboy hat and battle wounds, I think I'd probably vote for him if England was the kind of place where you voted on kings. The play, evolved (written and directed) by Alex Eaton ('07), was nothing less than thrilling.

This is my goodbye to the arts and entertainment section; this was my apology for never covering enough Bard events. I hope it was satisfactory. Ladies and gents, keep it up.

attempt, questions Western notions of the finite, stable "work." Its unfinished state might be taken as a final comment on the impossibility of pinning down the ontological position of the piece; two movements/formants have nearly infinite paths of development and execution, and three don't even exist.

Jumppanen overcomes significant conceptual and technical hurdles (not to mention the physical barrier of a nearly two and a half foot tall score) to present a coherent and beautiful rendition of the

Third Sonata. Especially in the section "Blocs II" of "Formant 3," his playing realizes Boulez's untraditional timbral world, heavy on harmonics and hanging resonances. I think Jumppanen is an excellent pianist, and an intelligent interpreter of Boulez's piano sonatas. Boulez's piano music proves more demanding listening than certain chamber or orchestral works like *Le Marteau sans Maître*, *Pli Selon Pli*, or the later *Repons*, but it remains rewarding, and serves as a summary of his early philosophical and aesthetic development.

Give Us A Break

For many of us, the next two weeks will be the busiest of the semester as we rush to finish (or let's be honest, begin) final papers and study for exams. This is obviously not a phenomenon that is unique to Bard, yet it seems as though many other colleges and universities have tried to alleviate the stress of finals with a Reading/Finals week at the end of each semester when classes are officially over. While Bard has often strived to be an institution that operates differently, this seems to be one tradition which it would benefit the school, especially the students, to adopt.

Granted, because of the nature of Bard's classes, most students will not have the kind of final exams students at larger schools have become accustomed to, so it probably is not necessary to set aside a week during which exams can take place. However, many of us do have final papers which require a significant amount of time and research. For those students who find themselves with ten to twenty page papers for each of their classes, it is very difficult to simultaneously complete those papers while still keeping up with regular course work that often runs up until the last day of class. It could be argued that if students began their final work earlier they would find themselves in less of a bind at the end of the semester, but for those of us with demanding classes who also want to have some kind of social life, this is easier said than done.

The most compelling argument against a finals week seems to be that one less week of class means one less week of material professors can work into their syllabus. While most of us at Bard certainly understand the value of rigorous courses which attempt to fit as much as possible into an amount of time that, even as it stands today, is often not long enough, we all recognize the frustration of being in class that last week of the semester when it is clear that no one has done their reading, and getting students to participate in class discussion is like pulling teeth. While as students we are held accountable for completing our work without excuses, the fact that so many of us have a hard time getting everything done those last couple weeks seems to indicate that it is not just an issue of rampant laziness.

Bard once had a Reading week in October that was ended (and replaced with Fall Break) after many students chose to use the time to leave campus and vacation instead of work. It does not seem unreasonable to assume, however, that with the increased workload and the deadline pressure of the end of the semester, students would be more likely to utilize the time properly. Some departments and professors have already chosen to incorporate this finals time into their schedules, ending classes a week early, or at least canceling the last class. This is a step in the right direction. It fosters a better environment for the final weeks of class, and it gives professors adequate energy to devote themselves to Moderations and Senior Projects. The Administration should consider a Reading week, or at least consult with professors and students on the subject, so that hopefully, the coming of spring does not have signify the transformation of classes into painful formalities.

THE EDITORS

It's Not Our Job

BY NOAH WESTON

When people voted for a large contribution of the Reserve Fund to the Student social space project, I was both pleased and frustrated. I took pleasure in the willingness of students to take some responsibility for their school's future, but found a greater frustration in the fact that they found such a gesture even necessary. Really, at what point did it become the job of students to compensate for the college's infrastructural neglect? Given the importance of having a new recreational space akin to the Old Gym, a possibly futile student donation sends the wrong message to all administrators. It tells them that they can disregard unified student opinion and good sense and leave it to those for whom they should be working, us, to wag our tails in hopes of a kind pat on the head and a building that should have been on their list of priorities the moment they closed the Old Gym.

But where's the money? Our President would tell you, as he has told many others, that if you can find a few million dollars for him, he will gladly endorse its use for a social space. If you were to ask him whether he valued such a space himself enough to take his own initiative to raise the money, it would be a far different story. As he tells parents every year, he might tell you that "This is a college" and not a "hotel, cruise ship, Dairy Queen," or whatever thing he has figured out Bard *isn't* that day. His conception of a college, however, seems to leave out an extra-curricular life in which I doubt he has the slightest involvement (and the debate team does not count). Not that I would expect Mr. Botstein to come to a Contradance or roll through a BSO party, but it is indisputable that he lacks the experiential wisdom to judge what serves this campus best socially.

That social element matters, too, contrary to what some among the bespectacled and bowtied might imply. As other writers in this paper have underscored, students come to college for more than classes. Their maturation here depends on access to sufficient social outlets as well, provided you have a place to host them. Unfortunately, we do not have enough space to allow for large scale events that help

us build a unified sense of community, which even the President must desire (though he might call community a "liberal myth.")

It cannot be our burden to bear, though. The college has an institutional imperative to maximize the amount of available spaces for student activities, or risk an increasingly factious campus life. Bard produces a rich diversity of student activity, just not a great deal of cross-demographic interaction. Whereas the Old Gym allowed for the transgression of social boundaries, its absence leaves a number of smaller venues that just cannot serve the same purpose. At first, I thought it simply nostalgia that kept Bard students from appreciating a recreational scene that was just as healthy as it had been when I first came here. The closer I looked, however, the more foolish I felt for underestimating the worth of a space like the Old Gym.

Forget autonomy, forget alcohol, and even forget the ability to tag on the walls. What hurts the most about the now nearly two year-long social space gap is the simple wish students have for a place specifically sanctioned for all kinds of student events. The Multipurpose Room is, spatially speaking, the closest thing to the Old Gym, but given its attachment to the Campus Center, as well as its frequent use by the college, it does not fill the demand for a large facility reserved solely for student-run activities: from concerts, to parties, to plays, and every other social impulse Bard fosters.

Obviously, the college can and will survive without a new student social facility, but should it have to? The school should not need its students to donate the initial gift for a building that should already be in construction. Good folks like our Central Committee Secretary Matt Wing have done enough advocating and enough pleading to demonstrate the need and demand for this building. It is time for the college to try a little harder on their end and give future Bard students another place to have fun *together*. After all, if our President can have his own orchestral playground, why can't the students who make his job possible have one measly building? I hope that in the coming semesters, the powers-that-be realize that part of being a college means serving the interests of students, and not just those that look good in the *Bardian*.

How Many Years in Does This Cease to be the New American Century?

BY JESSE MYERSON

The most cutting-edge journalism I've recently seen came, as it tends to these days, from that shining beacon of honest reportage: Comedy Central. Former *Daily Show* correspondent Stephen Colbert, on his new show *The Colbert Report*, interviewed Bill Kristol, current editor of *The Weekly Standard*, which may only possibly claim to hold the "standard" for caustic, radical neo-conservative drivel. In addition to challenging all of Kristol's arguments about the war in Iraq and the upcoming one in Iran (you know about this, right?), he pointed out something that almost no one in the corporate media will dare to point out: the existence of a group called The Project for the New American Century (PNAC). "How's that Project coming?" Colbert asked, "Come on, it's a terrific New American Century, right?"

I'll cut you some slack for not having heard about this one. There's no reason you should, since no one in power ever mentions it. Though it might sound like a secret organization making shady deals to take over the world through military might, that's simply not true; it is a *public* organization making shady deals to take over the world through military might. Check out <http://www.newamericancentury.org>, and you'll find signatories to its charter include Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Francis Fukuyama, I. Lewis Libby, Dan Quayle, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz.

That's not a bad list of names, although it certainly is a list of bad names. With devious aims to match devious names, PNAC is essentially to neo-conservatives what the NAACP is to black folks, the AARP is to the retired community and SNICK once was to nighttime children's television programming. It's got members in high places, a very distinct philosophical bent and documentation up the neo-wazoo.

So, who wants to read some scary shit? You? Well, you've forced me: okay. In a September 2000—this date is of crucial significance, study it well—report entitled "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century" (they really dig this "new century" shit), PNAC actually calls for "a new Pearl Harbor" as the vehicle to drum up immediate support for its policy aims, which include, among other things, reorganizing the military and invading Iraq. Sound familiar? That's because it's precisely what happened a year after its publication.

This is what Dick Cheney's internal monologue sounded like on the morning of September 11, 2001 (actual quotation, presumably): "*Holy fuck: I sure am relieved that my face is permanently molded into this demonic sneer, because it allows me to do less work pretending to be upset about what has just happened, since it's what I publicly claimed to want, a year ago. In reality, I'm so happy I could shoot a man's face, have a heart attack and redecorate hell.*"

All seriousness aside, though, this seems like some pretty important stuff, which makes me wonder why no one ever mentions it, which makes me wonder if the media are in bed with the administration, which makes me wonder if the President's next appointment will be a commentator for Fox News (since the occasion of this writing, its author has found out about Tony Snow—he swears that the appointment happened after he wrote the editorial and that his powers of prediction are rivaled only by his legitimacy where the Vice President is concerned).

In response, I've decided to start the Project for the Even Newer American Century. Our central tenet will be the acknowledgement that peace through war tends to lead to much more endemic insurgency, death and destruction than the typical, peaceful kind of peace, which we will officially prefer. Today, facebook groups; tomorrow: the world. The whole world. Bwah-hah-hah.

"I Love Hippies! Some of My Best Friends Have Dreadlocks!"

BY GENYA SHIMKIN

85. That's how many people requested a Day Of Silence t-shirt this year. On a campus so frequently lauded as "accepting," "open-minded," and "liberal," the number should have been over ten times that. Perhaps I overestimate the campus population. (I recognize that some people have personal reasons for not participating.) But why should this be an overestimation? Is it really so ridiculous to hope that half of the student body would put their money where their mouth is? The Day Of Silence is just one example of an extreme lack of involvement, and one I can speak on extensively as the organizer of the event on campus. However, this example is a wonderful portrait of two phenomena that are becoming ever more prevalent here on campus: the first I call "nonchalant tolerance" and the second is "the PC backlash." (PC here is politically correct, not peer counselor.)

The former, which seems rather self-explanatory, can best be defined as follows: people on a campus as progressive as ours don't feel the need to get involved in social activism because they feel that they are "doing their part" simply by virtue of being a member of the Bard community. Students seem to have a blasé attitude towards minorities, saying things like, "Of course I support gay marriage, I'm a liberal." What most students on this campus don't understand, I fear, is that tolerance and acceptance are not the same thing. Indeed, Thomas Jefferson (with all his faults) was on to something when he lobbied for the removal of the former word from the Constitution. Jefferson believed that the word "tolerance" implied that the minority was at the behest of the majority. Minorities on campus, whether sexual, racial, religious, or any other defining characteristic, deserve not tolerance, but acceptance, which implies understanding and equality. My first hand experience lies exclusively in the realm of attitudes towards sexual minorities, and thus I will not attempt to speak on behalf of any other group.

The second idea, "the PC backlash," is a wonderful, though sometimes aggravating twist on the outside community's view of Bard. Friends and family at home frequently tease me about how politically correct Bard must be. If only they knew. The prevalent ideology here seems to be something like "I can say things that would otherwise be horribly offensive, but because I'm at Bard, you know I don't mean it." This is tricky, and I love that people here speak their minds without censoring themselves. However, I can't help but wonder how much of the dialogue is rooted in a deeper prejudice. My two favorite examples of this phenomenon are both brilliantly intelligent young men who happen to write for this very publication, though they will remain nameless. I adore both of them, and trust that for them, at least, the intentions are pure. I don't think, however, that just anyone can pull this off. Everyone has their own set of prejudices and that is perfectly acceptable, but that doesn't mean we should hide behind a "liberal ideology" and not talk about them. In this example, the comments to which I refer are largely aimed at racial minorities, though a fair share are, again, directed towards sexual minorities.

My fear, or perhaps suspicion, in all of this is that we've somehow lost track of the dialogue that is so central to our attempts to live up to that "accepting" label. Somewhere along the line, we stopped talking about our differences, and began to treat them as material for The Comedy Workshop. This is all well and good, and I enjoy a laugh as much as the next person, but what are we losing by forsaking the actual human connection that used to be so central to the Bard mentality? In spite of my fear that we're drifting farther and farther from genuine acceptance, I found solace in an intelligent, articulate race-centered conversation I witnessed between two students as they played a game of billiards last week. But don't think this will stop me from trying to get 850 people signed up for the Day of Silence next year.

More Reading on Human Trafficking

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/> — Trafficking in Persons Report June 2005

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/> — website of the US Government Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons For more information on human trafficking check out:

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking-human-beings.html> — UN website on human trafficking

You can access the National Geographic article on 21st Century Slavery through the a-to-z journal list on the Bard Library site. Look for National Geographic — the article is under the September 2003 issue.

<http://www.protectionproject.org/> — group started at Johns Hopkins University, contains the 2005 Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children

<http://www.antislavery.org/> — UK program founded in 1839, successful both historically and in modern-day campaigns

<http://www.freetheslaves.net/> — US sister organization of the Anti-Slavery program, lists current news on human trafficking, links to other groups that work in the field to help victims of human trafficking

<http://www.iabolish.com/> — US organization which lists campaigns, survivor stories, information on slavery in specific countries

<http://www.polarisproject.org/polarisproject/> — survivor stories and other information on human trafficking

SSTOP WHAT WE CAN DO

BY CATHERINE BASS AND HANNAH COLE-CHU

Thinking about, let alone tackling, the human trafficking industry may seem overwhelming to the average student. As the UN, government agencies around the world, and innumerable NGOs continue to spend billions of dollars combating traffickers, the problem only grows more severe.

Human trafficking is a low-risk, high-profit industry in a world where law enforcement agencies lack manpower and training, a world where few people are aware that a problem even exists. The United States, in particular, has embarrassingly little press coverage of human trafficking, even though thousands of people are trafficked within the United States annually (estimates vary). With awareness, sorely lacking in most American communities, comes the power to strive for change.

Students can make a difference. Student movements in Eastern Europe have successfully conducted aggressive campaigns informing people at risk of their danger. They have been so successful, in fact, that traffickers in certain areas have been forced to leave urban areas in search of less informed victims. Student movements across our own country are making a name for themselves in the grassroots fight against trafficking. By hosting conferences and writing to popular media sources, students can raise the public's awareness of this issue. Student petitions to politicians and government agencies, combined with efficient fund-raising, can lead to more effective law enforcement, harsher punishments for perpetrators of human trafficking, and better rehabilitation programs for survivors. Students can also conduct awareness campaigns that help the public to identify victims and that help combat the stigma often attached to survivors.

Students Stopping the Trafficking of Persons (SSTOP) is dedicated to raising public awareness. SSTOP began at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. in April of 2005, the brainchild of just two dedicated students. A year later, the group has more than 200 members and has hosted two conferences on human trafficking. Georgetown SSTOP's president, senior Anna Paden, recently spoke in front of the UN about women in trafficking.

SSTOP Bard, though new to the campus this semester, has already gained a following of 36 students and organized two events. In February of this semester, SSTOP Bard sent two of its club heads to the Georgetown Student Conference "Trafficked" to learn more. Our weekend in D.C. was spent watching documentaries and listening to speakers such as FBI intelligence analysts, journalists, filmmakers, Customs Agents, ICE officials, NGO representatives, ritual abuse-torture specialists, and survivors. Christine Dolan, investigative journalist and founder of the Global Coalition to End Human Trafficking Now, later educated Bardians at a lengthy Q&A session hosted by SSTOP in the MPR. SSTOP Bard's final event of this semester will be a movie screening in Weiss Cinema on Monday, May 8th, at 8:00 PM. Our goals next semester include organizing a conference for other colleges in the area, hosting a formal to raise money and awareness, helping to start a SSTOP chapter at Vassar, publishing articles in local newspapers, and writing petitions to politicians.

Millions of lives are ruined by human trafficking and nothing has been done to successfully stop it. As daunting as the reality is, as awareness increases, so will the ability to accomplish something. This SSTOP chapter is one humble group of students. The more students across the country who work together and realize that this generation is capable of doing something about it, the more attainable our goal will be.

Facts About Human Trafficking From Christine Dolan's Report *A Shattered Innocence, The Millennium Holocaust.*

Human trafficking generates 19 billion dollars annually.

Child pornography and child prostitution generate 34 billion dollars annually. The U.S. food industry generates 35 billion.

Young girls are in high demand as prostitutes—girls as young as six. The preference is for the girls to be hooked on heroin because it is easier to control them.

There are "conditioning camps" in Albania, Italy, and the countries of the former Yugoslavia where women are sequestered, raped, tortured and starved in order to break them into prostitution.

About 30% of those who go whoring in the Balkans are staffs of UN Troops, and 80% of the income of prostitutes in this area is supplied by soldiers of NATO-led Multinational Stabilization Forces.

In Geneva, the sex trade is linked to the hotels and conventions. When the automobile industry descends upon the city, an unusual influx of younger children is shipped in as "fresh meat."

In Milan, women who were abducted from eastern European bloc countries have been auctioned naked for \$1,000.

In some countries, traffickers of human beings (slave traders) receive lighter sentences than drug dealers.

12 million clients travel to Asia annually for sex with children.

In Sri Lanka there are 10,000 prostitutes in brothels who are between the ages of 6 and 14.

Highway Arizona between Tuzla and Sarajevo is a rape highway where kidnapped and trafficked victims are taken to be "broken" by violence, torture, gang rapes, and drugs.

Approximately 50,000 women and children are trafficked to the United States annually in the sex trade.

Casey's Final Deconstruction

The Long Goodbye

BY HENRY CASEY

Dear Bard,

It's time to say goodbye, and since we're such a crazy "diverse" group of almost-adults, I thought my farewell would be best expressed in a series of letters to the community. The sun is shining, my senior project is turned in and done, and I've finally realized it's time to get some things off of my chest. Time to burn some bridges.

Dear All Bard Clubs Looked Down Upon For Being "Weird," or "Stupid."

Keep doing what you're doing. You're having fun. Be inclusive. Don't let what others say get you down. Your make Bard the college it is.

Dear Whoever Designs Bard's Shirts,

We're a college of creative students, and this is the best you can come up with? The boring white-text-on-black-shirt graduate shirt that I could have designed? Get student input. Make more, cooler t-shirts. Stop making shirts that look like they were made by Abercrombie & Fitch (for those too old to know: they are a clothing company that designs horribly mainstream clothing).

Dear WXBC,

There's this thing called Hip Hop. Put some of it in your rotation shelf.

Dear Bard Student Body,

Can you name the student who actually has her own office in the security building? Can you name the head of Party Patrol? Kinda surprising that a student has the kind of power that Laura Bomyea has. Remember any of the few articles she wrote for the paper wherein she took the administration's party line on every topic? I do. I question whether or not a student should have so much power.

Dear Henry Casey,

Don't show up randomly throughout the year and show Bardians that there's no life after college. You don't want to be that kid. Don't write for Bard publications after you've graduated, you *really* don't want to be that kid. Only show up for graduations, don't wear out your welcome.

Dear Current Bard Administration,

Can we, the students, get some transparency *ever*? I feel like for the past 4 years I've been going to a school run by a shadow government with backstage deals. The wanna-be interrogations that consisted the school's "war on drugs" were the kind of thing that made me think about going to *any* other school that would have acted a little more like adults, rather than power hungry babies who break up suites for having beer pong games and who tempt students to snitch on students? If you read the previous paragraph, I hope you understand that all I'm asking for – what the student body deserves – is some clarity, some transparency for chrissakes. I hope that in the future, you manage events in less of a mob-rule mentality.

The rumblings in to why exactly Fred Barnes was terminated are starting to make a cacophony of accusation. It's only a matter of time before someone shouts what needs to be said. Years of hearing about bad experiences with the now former head of Residence Life make it hard for me to dismiss these rumors. Something's got to give.

Dear Most Of The Bard Faculty,

Get back in touch with your students. A wise professor recently told me that the faculty will never be as in touch with the school as the students are. This may be true, but I have an idea. Next time you have a meeting with an advisee, or bump into a student talk to them – if they're willing to – about what's going on in their life. What's going on at Bard? What are the students like? I'm starting to think that many of them (outside of Professors who read [read: suffer through] creative writing assignments, my own included) are out of touch.

Dear Admissions Department,

I've got one thing to say: stop accepting so many damn kids. If too many choose to go to Bard after being accepted, you should suck it up and cancel their acceptance.

Dear Bard Free Press,

I like what you guys are doing, and where you're going. The layout, the community blotter, the (finally) active debate on the whole Israel/Palestine concern, everything Peter Neely, Brenden Beck, and Karen Soskin have ever written in your pages, it's getting so good, and in the interest of friendly competition, I thought I'd tell you that. You might also want to read the next paragraph.

Oh, and another thing? *Free Press*, it was Tom Mattos of '05 that made the fake amendment in your name, attacking the *Observer* at the Budget Forum that ended with a dance-off. I'm sorry that he did that, and was trying to stir up bad blood. It's my hope that the *Observer/Free Press* bad blood is over.

Dear The Powers That Be That Run The Campus Center,

The campus center was originally envisioned by the Bertelsmanns to be a Student Center, not an alcohol and substance free centerpiece to bring tours through to show how amazing and nice Bard is. Give it back to us. Give us back the TV lounge. Take the Career Development offices and the TLS offices and put them in Ludlow or somewhere else where they actually belong. The students need those rooms, and they go unused after business hours are over, which I hope you realize is not when students go to sleep. Andrea Conner once told me that the Campus Center is to be a place where students can go to not be around alcohol. I've asked around, and not a single student said that's why they go to the campus center.

Dear Bard Observer,

Keep on trucking. Protect ya neck. Put *more* words on the cover. More investigative journalism, like Michael Benhabib's article on Health Services would make for a better publication. Cover more Bard concerts, plays and art. Don't publish articles – letters to the editor are okay – written by students who are not a part of Bard. Ignore teachers who tell you to quit the paper and focus on their classes. To quote Juelz Santana, "My resolution was, do everything I've been doing, better than I usually does."

Echoes From the Past...the Past...the Past

The following editorial was originally published in *The St. Stephen's College Messenger* in October 1898. The subject of the article, the assassination of Empress Elisabeth of Austria, occurred on September 10, 1898. Though never significantly discussed by students writing for *The St. Stephen's College Messenger*,

Bard's Broken Social Scene

And how to fix it

BY JAKE GOLDWASSER, SOPHIA KRAEMER-DAHLIN, AND CHRISTINE NIELSEN

For two years now the student body of Bard has been discussing the question of replacing the Old Gym. Administrators have not proven nearly as interested in resolving the issue, perhaps hoping that once the Old Gym passes out of recent memory and into mythology, the new classes of Bardians won't know what they're missing. As three sophomores, however, we declare that we do miss the Old Gym, though we never had it. We feel the absence of a social space, a feeling which has shifted over our two years at Bard into general social stagnation. We think this is unhealthy, recognizing that our social lives are inseparably tied to our academic lives, and that one cannot thrive without the other. The question over the past three semesters has remained, "Will we replace the Old Gym?" We propose that the question change from "Will we?" to "What will it look like?"

Though we say we miss the Old Gym, we do not mean to say that we'd like the new social space to be a replica of the decrepit hulk that has now been re-appropriated to serve as another artistic venue. Though we would like our new social space to have a great sound system, we see several other features as being at least equally important. To begin with, the space must be easily available for many uses and be predominantly under student control. Just another dance floor won't suffice. That would be perfectly fine is the space were only for concerts and parties. It was a setup that worked for the Old Gym, and the design has been applied to SMOG as well. But we see other possibilities for the new space. It could also be a place to study, a place to relax with other students, a meeting spot for clubs, maybe even an alternative to certain corporate eating establishments that seem rather unpopular with the student body. While these diverse fairy tales of social livability seem far-fetched, they would all be possible if a certain other

pipe dream became a reality.

Until the mid 80's there was a bar in the Annandale Hotel. When the drinking age changed from 18 to 21, the bar lost a lot of income all at once and was closed. The bar was a fixture of the Bard community, and was widely embraced among students, faculty, and administration alike. The reasons for the college's acceptance of the bar seem foreign to the administration's current stance toward the bottle; however, we see a definite upside to having a bar on campus which even the administration should appreciate. In addition to offering more opportunities for campus employment to the ever-oppressed non-work-study folks (and possibly work-study folks as well), providing an informal social space (very much needed), and maybe a student-run café or restaurant to oppose the campus food monster, a campus bar could actually be an asset to the administration's efforts to combat irresponsible drinking. Bars can be easily regulated, and a campus bar at Bard would certainly be so closely observed by the administration that getting alcohol without an ID would be like breaking into Fort Knox with a spork. If the administration wants to cut down illegal alcohol abuse, they won't do it by establishing a zero-tolerance policy. A campus bar would be infinitely more successful, using the tried and true methods of the real world, where it is considerably more difficult for a minor to get drunk. If a section of the student space were devoted to this venture, we envision a more versatile, flexible, and generally better student space than the college has seen thus far. Instead of making the issue of a new student space into a campaign to bring back "Old Bard," it could be a way to create a "New Bard" which is not a haven for depression and nostalgia.

Students! If the idea of a New Bard appeals to you, and if you think our vision of a student space is workable, we encourage you to raise your voices and be heard. You can write letters, call up President Botstein and ask him (politely) to talk to you, get a petition started—even write more editorials. An easy way to start would be to clip this article and send it to your favorite Bard administrator. College is for learning, yes, but it's also our home for four years of our lives—a home for which we pay exorbitant sums of money. We have the right to ask for more.

eight months before the publication of this article the United States declared war on Spain. At the end of this conflict, the United States acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines as colonies.

The perspective of the author, R.E. Shulz 1900, interestingly reflects a particular moment in both the history of the United States and our institution. Shulz's perspective on political and social change might be considered in relation to the demographics of Bard, and institutions of higher education in general, during the late 19th century.

—Matt Kelly

The Assassination of the Austrian Empress and Its Significance

While entertaining a number of friends, having no thought of any danger, the Empress of Austria was assassinated.

The murderer was immediate-

ly apprehended, leaving no shadow of doubt as to the criminal. His creed—Anarchism; his associates, anarchists, prove conclusively that the assassination of the empress has a significance...

In Italy, Russia, and France, the homes of Anarchism, what liberties do the majority of people enjoy? Practically none. In those lands the residents are ground down socially, religiously, and politically, until oppression no longer expresses their condition. The heads of religious affairs barter and traffic until they out-tetzel Tetzels. Those holding the reins of government seek their own aggrandizement instead of the welfare of the community at large. A brotherhood of man seems to be their most remote thought, and they have no apparent conception of the meaning of the word sociology.

With a tinge of regret it must be admitted that America, Germany, and England are not free from the causes which generate anarchism.

Continued on page 13

The New Emporia

The Law and the Gospel:

Part Two

BY MATTHEW L. ROZSA

In my previous article, I discussed the danger posed to America's system of government by the Christian Right. Far more sinister than the increasing influence of the Christian Right, however (and much less frequently discussed due to the self-censorship imposed on Western dialogue by political correctness) is the rise of the theological-driven imperialism of extremist Islamist movements.

Convinced by their religious leaders that God has ordained them to conquer every nation and convert all of its citizens to Islam, a substantial percentage of these extremists either engage in or support campaigns of terrorism and outright war against those powers (primarily Western) that they see as being most influential, and thus whose toppling would be most beneficial to their cause. America, Israel, India, and Western Europe mark merely the beginning of a litany of lands that so many Islamists wish to topple as a prelude to creating a religiously-based global empire.

The threat posed to modern civilization by these extremist elements exemplifies theo-imperialism at its worst – namely, the belief that because one's religion is innately superior to all others, those who espouse that faith not only have the duty to spread it throughout the world by any means necessary, but the right to treat those who do not share their views as being inferior. The Western world has, as a matter of principle, embraced the idea that each individual life has an inalienable integrity to it, whereas sizeable minorities in the Muslim world believe that only those who worship their God are entitled to the rights and respect that they demand for themselves.

It is important for me to note that I am not implying that all Muslims adhere to this point-of-view. Indeed, I will not even go so far as to say that the problem is one with the Islamic faith (which is far too complex to be summarized so cursorily). The problem is one that has long been an integral part of the human condition – the instinctive desire that all human beings possess to acquire superiority, and with it power, over their fellow man. What separates civilized individuals from their weaker or more wicked counterparts is the capacity to recognize this desire as being immoral, and thus suppress that instinct as they would all of mankind's other ingrained vices. Many human beings, however, do not suppress that instinct – either inadvertently or by choice – and as such, fight to use whatever resources are at their disposal to obtain perceived or actual dominance. Religion, because it provides so many cultures with a vital lens through which to view life, is a powerful tool that has long been used as an outlet for accomplishing this aim. At its worst the supremacist agenda can then become an overriding feature within the given religion, contaminating entire societies in the process.

In this regard, the theo-imperialism that is continually gaining more influence in the modern Islamic world is no different than the political aspirations of the Christian right – it is more dangerous solely because the former is currently taking extremes that the latter has not. Both movements, however, exist and flourish because they provide massive numbers of human beings with an ideological medium through which they can justify their primordial desire to achieve dominance. Similar groups can be found among other faiths, which by circumstance are less powerful today than their Christian and Islamic counterparts – from Judaism and Mormonism to Hinduism and Buddhism. When we attempt to find excuses for these groups – by buying into their claims that they are

oppressed because they cannot forcibly impose their beliefs on others, by arguing that maybe it is we and not they who are somehow to blame, or in any other way – we only create an environment that encourages their behavior. Unequivocal condemnation, in action as well as rhetoric, is required.

This brings me to the second part of the William Jennings Bryan speech that I introduced in the preceding article. One of the reasons that I have such deep respect for this oratorical work is because it understands, and honors, religion's place in human life – something that we as spiritual beings must never fail to do. Bryan was clearly aware of the dangers inherent in allowing religion to directly influence public policy, but at the same time, he was a man who was deeply affected by his own faith, and used it as a model for many of the public policies that he chose to espouse, from the free silver movement to anti-imperialism and women's suffrage. He understood that religion was, in general, a powerful force, but that like all forms of power, it could be used to justify wicked as well as noble ends. The genius of the following text can be found in the fact that its message, word-for-word, addresses one of the central conflicts of our era by recognizing this fact. It is sobering to contemplate that what needs to be said today was best stated one-hundred-and-sixteen years ago.

You cannot judge a man's life by the success of a moment, by the victory of an hour, or even by the results of a year. You must view his life as a whole. You must stand where you can see the man as he treads the entire path that leads from the cradle to the grave – now crossing the plain, now climbing the steep, now passing through pleasant fields, now wending his way with difficulty between rugged rocks – tempted, tried, tested, triumphant. The completed life of every lawyer, either by its success or failure, emphasizes the words of Solomon – "The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

By practicing upon the highest plane the lawyer may not win the greatest wealth, but he wins that which wealth cannot purchase and is content to know and feel that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches; and loving favor rather than silver and gold."

There are pioneers of the gospel whose names you speak with reverence, Calvin, Knox, the Wesleys and Asbury, besides many still living, and you love them not without cause. There are those in our profession whom we delight to honor. Justinian and Coke, Blackstone and Jay, Marshall and Kent, Story and Lincoln, men who have stood in the thickest of the fight, have met every temptation peculiar to our profession, and yet maintained their integrity.

It is a fact to which we point with no little pride, that with a history of a hundred years no member of the Supreme Court of the United States has ever been charged with corrupt action, although untold millions have been involved in the litigation before the court. Nor do I now recall any member of the supreme court of any State who has been convicted of misusing his office.

"The Law and the Gospel." Great in their honored names, great in their history, great in their influence. To a certain extent they supplement each other. The law asks of the gospel counsel, not commands. The gospel goes far beyond the reach of the law, for while the law must cease to operate when its subject dies, the gospel crosses the dark river of death and lightens up the world which lies beyond the tomb. The law is negative, the gospel positive; the law says "do not unto others that which you would not have others do unto you," while the gospel declares that we should "do to others that which we would that others should do unto us."

"The Law and the Gospel." They form an exception to the rule that in union there is strength, for each is strongest when alone. And I believe that the greatest prosperity of the State and greatest growth of the church will be found when the law and the gospel walk, not hand in hand, but side by side.

there is a lesson which it will be well to observe. Just so long as men think that there is too much inequality, just so long will the radical element cause the destruction of those whom they believe to be their oppressors.

Then let us as reasonable beings, going forth into the various professions, use our influence to alleviate suffering, to bring about the realization of "a more common humanity," to strive for religious, social, and political freedom; for the more freedom we enjoy in these things, the better we become morally and intellectually, and by thus doing we shall strike the first powerful blow at the most accursed creed known to-day – Anarchism.

-R.E. Shulz 1900

Student Reading Series

May 3, 7:30 pm

Manor Cafe

Christine Hou

Patricia No

Patrick Tesh

Aborted Editorials

BY MATTHEW ROZSA

As is the case with all too many writers, I often find myself carrying as many incomplete works as printed ones. Since this – along with the second part of "The Law and the Gospel" – is my final contribution to "The Bard Observer", I have decided to include excerpts from three articles that, for numerous reasons, were not published until today. It is my hope that a sample of what could have been will be as rewarding as the actual pieces themselves would have been.

The Rights of Homosexuals:

I have often been disturbed by the fact that so many of my editorials challenge Bard's widely-held political assumptions. While I believe that most of the criticisms I levied against Bard were correct, I cannot deny that it is much easier for an aspiring pundit to criticize the institutions within which he or she operates than it is to laud them. Praise is far less attractive to youth than censure, for the former does not offer nearly as many opportunities for intellectual insolence as does the latter. Therefore, I felt obligated to praise Bard for one of its most admirable positions – namely, its unwavering defense of the oppressed. One group that has been vigorously oppressed are homosexuals, and as such, I felt obligated to commend Bard for its firm support of gay rights by explaining why I shared their beliefs.

The issue that I have with those who oppose the rights of homosexuals, however, is not that they hold their convictions. Rather it is the fact that they wish to enforce them in such a way as to harm those who do not share them. The pages of history are stained with the blood and tears of millions who suffered at the hands of those who used their beliefs as a weapon... I do not agree with the perspective of those who feel that homosexuality is a sin, and thus condemn the struggle of these individuals to obtain equal rights. The way I see it, once again from a broad historical perspective, history is full of movements where individuals will fight for the basest of causes – the ability to conquer land, obtain political power, or amass a great fortune through unsavory means... The current homosexual struggle provides a rare exception to this rule. They fight not for land, power, or profit, but for something far more fundamental and admirable than that. They fight for the right to love. They fight not only for the right to possess, privately and publicly, that self-respect which so many men and women take for granted; they also fight for the right to love other human beings. In a world that, past and present, and in every corner of the globe, has been plagued with an endless hatred that finds countless forms, there are few causes as inspiring as the struggle of human beings who fight for the right to love. It is a rare opportunity for any individual to have the privilege of taking part in so noble a cause, and toward it I am admittedly selfish – I can think of no honor greater than being able to say that on this major issue, I fought on the side of the angels. Those who disagree with me have a right to their convictions, but they should be warned that history will be harsh with them.

To Jesse Myerson:

Halloween 2005 was a very unpleasant evening for me. I had been eagerly awaiting an article that one of Bard's more vocal political commentators, Jesse Myerson, had told me he was going to write about my previous piece for "The Observer". Although I knew it would be critical of my editorial, I had not anticipated a work that would devote more time to insults than actual argument.

The article below was my response to Myerson's piece, one that I ultimately decided not to print due to the

Echoes, continued from page 12

Sweat-shop, mining, and manufacturing districts are operated in such a manner that they must necessarily develop a rebellion, and strike down those things which are conducive to the peace and happiness of the multitude...

However, with all the existing wrongs, citizens in general endeavor to eradicate evils through legislation, which is certainly a more just way than demolishing government and assassinating the heads of institutions. The anarchist strives to upset the government, overturn all, then to restore order that shall be an "Utopia," out of the chaos. Assuredly he will continue his nefarious work just as long as the oppression is permitted by law.

In the assassination of the Austrian Empress

The Social Repercussions of Sexile

BY SHOSHI ROBERTS

You know the signs, you know the signals: a red scrunchie on the doorknob, tape over the lock, or "THE SEX" frantically scrawled on the white board with screaming monkey noises coming from within. Yes, this is the state of sexile. As we all know, everybody loves being locked out, especially when they are devoid of their books, cell phone, and/or all clothing except for a towel. In the event of sexile, responses tend to vary according to personality, exasperation level, and volume of the noises coming from the room.

An assertive roommate in a rush may knock on the door and shout a kind, but salient message through the door as to their need to come in "sometime soon" and courteously leave for a few more minutes. The timid roommate may flee immediately and hide under a convenient rock, tree, or shrub until sex is abolished nationwide. This leaves the aggressive roommate who may knock down the door, barge in, grab their stuff (including any and all remaining condoms in the room), and exit with a flourish, making sure to leave the door in its peaceful resting place on the floor.

The negotiation of sexile, or lack thereof, is all about politics: how many times you have sexiled your roommate, how many times they have sexiled you, how many times condoms have been stolen and used for balloons, etc. In a completely non-creepy-stalker way, posting your schedule on the wall is not a bad idea, that way your roommate will know when you will most likely be out. If the relationship between you and your roommate has come to resemble that of a couple engaged in divorce proceedings, perhaps a dose of revenge is just the right condiment to sprinkle over your proverbial sandwich. It has been said that sexiling is the most effective means of revenge. These are wise words that should be heeded only by the bold because revenge, once set in motion assumes the characteristics of a pendulum swinging lower and lower.

Inverse sexile is suggested for the bewildered roommate who needs to write the equivalent of the great American novel with thirty minutes left to go on the deadline. The basic principle involves kicking the lovers out to go have sex somewhere else. In extreme cases, sudden conversions to Christianity, personal vows of celibacy, and buckets of holy water are suggested. As it is now spring, your now inversely sexiled roommate and his or her lover have the opportunity to explore the natural wonders that Bard College provides and get closer to nature in many more intimate ways. It might be kind of you to throw a blanket out to them before you slam the door, if you can spare a thirty second break from your literary masterpiece. Just for good measure, you can put tape, a scrunchie, or "THE WORK" on the door for dramatic effect or, more likely, personal catharsis.

All in all, in the name of preserving harmony, you and your roommate need to make an agreement to respect each other's wishes, privacy, and condom stashes. Avoidance of sex while the roommate is in the room is generally suggested, unless agreements have been previously made, or an impromptu threesome is desired. This can also backfire, and an unpleasant castration of the appropriate party with a rusty cheese grater may occur. Communication is the key if you both want to keep the option open for fucking like rabid bunnies, minus the rabies. In the event of a necessary and violent sexile, apologies must be made, preferably in the form of a mint on the pillow and a haiku similar to the one below:

Desperate for tail,
Jettisoned you were, Alas!
So sorry, my friend.

Sick?
ext. 6063
Need a little love?
ext. 6063
Call CARE BEARS
ext. 6063

Leave your name, dorm and room #,
vegan/regular option and we'll DELIVER
A CARE PACKAGE TO YOUR DOOR!
Because you're worth it.

Rozsa, continued from page 13

intervention of external circumstances. As most Bardians now know, a neo-Nazi named Hal Turner had chosen to hold a racist rally in Kingston in mid-November, and I could not in good conscience fail to do my part to encourage Bardians to attend the counter-protest which had been orchestrated against him. As I would not be allowed to print both articles (and could not print either one in my regular column, since neither fulfilled the minimum length requirement), it came as a no-brainer that combating Turner was more important than any personal self-defense.

When I was first informed that you planned on writing a response to my article on Barack Obama, I must confess that I was excited at the prospect of reading what you had to say. I have heard you discuss politics many times before, in forums both public and private, and had previously found your comments to be lucid and insightful. I love a good intellectual debate, and I was flattered that you would consider me to be a worthy adversary.

The only way for me to be honest about what has happened since will be for me to be blunt: I feel let down by what you produced. Instead of something intelligent and coherent, I was dumbfounded by the manner in which you ranted and raved, attempting to mask your evident lack of political knowledge and research with an air of authority. Presumption of quality without any support is a mortal enemy to good debate; I assumed that you of all people would know this. Yet even as you impugned the character of my arguments — arguments that were supported by research that I saw fit to cite in my article — you failed to state anything of any value that exceeded the realm of mere speculation and opinion.

I was also disappointed by the tone of your article. Although my piece attempted to make substantial claims, I also made a point of creating an aura of good-humor around what I wrote, both to emphasize that (to a certain extent) my views should be taken with a grain of salt, and to make sure that those who might disagree with my opinions would not feel as if I were slighting them as individuals. Not only did you fail to make this same conscientious effort, you seemed to go to the opposite extreme.

I was actually hurt by many of the things that

you said about me, both directly and through implication. In the course of your article, you stated that I was politically inept, naïve, and susceptible to spouting my views without substantiation. I expected better from you. I hope that it isn't necessary for me to explain why name-calling and slander are inappropriate in any intellectual discussion. Barring any moral considerations involved, they also degrade the quality of what is being said by either author, and instead reduce what should be a productive conversation into the literary equivalent of a cockfight.

Generation Van Buren:

I would like to conclude this article — as well as the sum total of my contributions to "The Observer" — with the following quote. Culled from "The Autobiography of Martin Van Buren", it addresses one of my great concerns about Western education — namely, the way that it teaches students to view learning as a means of attaining material and social success, rather than as a useful and rewarding end in its own right. Few men were better qualified to discuss the dangers inherent in such a system than President Van Buren, a man of great ambition and drive, who found that the fruition of his life's efforts — the acquisition of the presidency — was rendered moot by the lack of wisdom which he brought to that office.

I cannot pass from the subject of my early professional career in inferior tribunals without a caution to my young friends, the circumstances of whose start in life may resemble my own, against the adoption of a similar course. The temptation to anticipate professional fame is a strong one, and my success, humble as it has been, is well calculated to mislead young men of genius and ambition. Whatever the degree of that success may have been they may be assured that it would have been much greater and more substantial if like many others, who may not have succeeded as well, I had first acquired a sound education and stored my mind with useful knowledge. After those invaluable objects are substantially accomplished, many advantages may be derived from the practice I pursued; but if those acquisitions do not precede its adoption they will in all probability never be made.

Real American Heroes

Richard Nixon

BY TOM SCHULTZ

Before I talk about how great Richard Nixon is, I must inform the reader that this will be the last installment of Real American Heroes, because I am tired of writing them and frankly, the last few have been egregiously piss-poor. I've also run out of celebrities I respect (roughly 8). I realize that there's maybe one issue after this one so it doesn't matter much, but don't come crying to me in a fortnight when you open the *Observer* in gleeful anticipation to find Real American Heroes replaced by "The Rainforest: Not Technically a Forest," by Rob Ross.

Ask people on the street who the worst president in United States history is, and many will finger Richard Nixon as a candidate. This is partly because a lot of people can't name a president not named Lincoln who took office before 1960. It is also due, however, to a general misconception of Richard Nixon that I feel compelled to dispel after which I might be impelled to repel those who would expel me from political circles. At any rate, there will be a lot of 'pelling' going on.

Richard "Tricky Dick" Nixon was born a poor Quaker child in Yorba Linda, California. He joined the navy in World War II, and while there he raised money for his eventual Senate campaign by playing poker. He was nominated as Eisenhower's Vice President in 1952 but lost the subsequent presidential against that scoundrel John F. Kennedy and then the California gubernatorial race against Pat Brown.

However, Dick Nixon is not easily trifled with. He ran again for president in 1968 and defeated Hubert H. Humphrey, and was reelected 4 years later in one of the biggest landslide victories in American history.

There are two main arguments that Nixon's critics like to bring up, the first being the Watergate scandal. After all, Nixon did illegally use wiretaps and order break-ins at democratic offices. But really, what

modern president hasn't probably used some illegal means to further his own election campaign? It's really matter of being caught, in my opinion. Nixon's justification for this horrible corruption was simply "I had to win. That's the thing you don't understand. The important thing is to win." I understand that sounds a bit unpatriotic and dishonest, but I believe that's an admirable attitude.

The second argument against Nixon, which is fairly specific to Bard, is the following "Say... wasn't Nixon a... a conservative?"

Well he did run on the Republican ticket, and he touted "conservative American values" but his policies were actually fairly balanced politically. He created the Environmental Protection Agency, advocated for gun control, and implemented the first affirmative action programs. And perhaps most importantly at the time, he initiated the policy of détente with Russia and opened up diplomatic relations with China. And I don't really have a problem with conservative values, except perhaps for homophobia, racism, nativism, rampant materialism, pedophilia and incest. And rampant materialism is iffy.

Anyway, the point is that Richard Nixon was a much better guy than people realize. I understand if people at Bard hate him—after all, he did campaign against all the "hippie beatniks" who protested the Vietnam War—but perhaps that's part of the reason I'm transferring.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

IDFC: 7pm Schindler's List
9pm Camp

SMOG: 10:30pm Easy Tease

10pm 4SQUARE MPR

THURSDAY, MAY 4

Open Mic 9pm Down the Road

SMOG: 9pm Infinite Limbs

FRIDAY, MAY 5

BFC: Here She Comes
Watch Out for the Femme Fatale!
7pm Double Indemnity
9pm Out of the Past
10:45pm The Last Seduction

SMOG: 9pm Fursaxa, Death
Chants, Espers

Lord Byron's Loveletter, a play by
Tennessee Williams
8pm Manor

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Urban Cowboy Night
9pm MPR

Lord Byron's Loveletter, a play
by Tennessee Williams
8pm Manor

SMOG: 11pm Soul
Kahnsenses

SUNDAY, MAY 7

BFC: Triple Troma
7pm Tromeo and Juliet
9pm Surf Nazis Must Die
10:45pm The Toxic Avenger
SMOG: 7:30 Jacob Band, The
Dirty Projectors

MONDAY, MAY 8

Hebrew Table 6:30-7:30PM
Kline Committee Room

Students for a Free Tibet 6:45pm
Kline President's Room

SMOG: 7pm Eliot, K8 Hardy

TUESDAY, MAY 9

Registration!

Bard Democrats 9PM Campus
Red Room

SMOG: 9:00pm
Architeuthis, Holidaymaker,
Palimpsest, Powernap

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

Math/CS Table 12pm Kline

SMOG: 9pm Rubbed Raw

10pm 4SQUARE MPR

Midnight Breakfast
11:30pm Kline

THURSDAY, MAY 11

French Table 12:30-1:30pm
Kline President's Room

FRIDAY, MAY 12

Scottish Country dancing 7:30-
9:30PM Stenvan Aerobics stu-
dio, Stevensen Gym

BFC: Dystopia in Three Ways
7pm Blade Runner
9pm Akira
11:10pm The Road Warrior

SATURDAY, MAY 13

FLASHMONSTER!! 5PM
Blum Amphitheatre

"May Dance" 8pm PAC,
Theater 2

SUNDAY, MAY 14

BFC: Some Gore Fest
7pm Dead Alive
9pm Re-Animator
10:45pm Bloodsucking Freaks

"May Dance" 8pm PAC, Theater
2

MONDAY, MAY 15

Spring Vocal Recital 7pm
Bard Hall

"Songs You've Never Heard"
Songwriting Workshop Concert
Blum 8pm

"May Dance" 8pm PAC,
Theater 2

TUESDAY, MAY 16

LAST DAY OF CLASSES!
Enjoy your summer.....



"See you in hell,
Sarge!"

Flashmonster's final
show of the year
May 13th, Blum
Amphitheater, 5pm

Improv for monsters

The Observer

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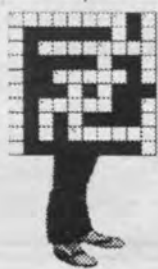
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by
Noah Weston

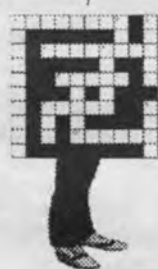
Hosey, I don't think
I'm up for b-ball today.



Why not, Crosswald?



I'm in one of those moods,
you know? Like it's all
just down but no across.



Is there anything
I can do to help?



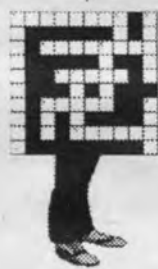
Well, you can maybe
help me answer this
question, Hosey.



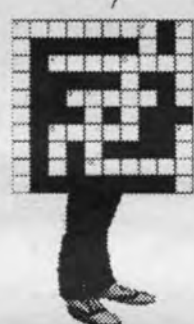
Lay it on me, son.



OK, so over 2,300 soldiers
have been killed in Iraq,
which doesn't even begin
to approach thousands more
killed among the civilian
population...



And I just feel like people don't give a genuine shit about
it. Sure, they say that they hate war, but I wonder how
many of them are following the conflict as it unfolds,
as opposed to whether Brangelina gave birth to Brangelito
and Brangelito. It's driving me fucking nuts...to the point
where I just want to slap the shit out of them until
Sacajawea coins come out of their nose and mouth.



So what do you think?



My mouth leaks a
lot sometimes.



TOR TILLAS

MARK ESSEN

After wasting a
couple hours on LJ,
Myspace, and
Friendster perusing
through profiles of
friends and friends
of friends, I realize
the peers in my
immediate age
group straddle a
borderline.



This demarcation
line divides those
of us who have
incorporated the
internet as both an
information tool
and social
extension from
those amongst our
age group who've
either willingly or
passively let



livejournal text by
<http://typefiend.livejournal.com/>

the technology
pass them by.
Stumble over the
proverbial fence a
couple birthday
candles less and
basically everyone
and their social
circle are online,



< AUTO-REPLY > :
fuck yourself in the
face and choke on
it motherfucker 8-)

Tender Vittles

by mekko harjo

DOG

